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PRIMARY EDUCATION
ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY



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INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION

International yearbook of education

COMMUNAL HEALTH CELL

PRIMARY EDUCATION
ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Prepared for the
International Bureau of Education

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Preface

With this volume of the *International yearbook of education*, the BIE begins a series of thematic yearbooks. The present volume, on primary education, is based on the considerable documentation produced on the occasion of the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education and on the major works devoted to this subject in recent years. A perusal of this volume will suffice to convey the importance of primary education not only in relation to the education system as a whole, of which it is the basis, but also in relation to the overall process of development of countries.

While it is truism to say that, for the vast majority of countries in the world, primary schooling is the only democratic level of education - since in principle it is supposed to be open to all strata of the population - it is nonetheless true that by its conception, organization, means and indeed the whole environment which conditions it, this level of education exists in as many forms as there are different political, cultural and economic contexts. Apparent similarities between education systems in countries which otherwise seem unlike often mask semantic changes of great consequence with respect to the fundamental concepts on which the system is based; such as the ideas of democratization of primary education, of adaptation of this education to national and regional realities, of compulsory schooling, of equality of opportunity and so on. A situation like this demands from the analyst the keen attention, sense of meaning and rigour that Professor García Garrido possesses in the highest degree and to which the present work bears witness. By the wealth and relevance of the information he gives us and by the breadth of his analyses and synthesis, the author enables us to follow through the byways of recent history, as well as through the undergrowth of highly dissimilar contexts and situations, the developments which have led today to the various policies with regard to primary education, to its organization and administration, to its curricula, to the training of its teachers, to the milestones of its democratization and to the future developments which may be foreseen from the present situation

The main documentation used by Professor García Garrido is constituted by the national reports and replies to questionnaires addressed to the International Bureau of Education by Member States in preparation for the thirteenth session of the International Conference on Education. Thus it is official documentation bearing on educational developments in those States during the period 1982-1983. The reader will be grateful to Professor García Garrido for not having overlooked any relevant item of information, however small, contained in the reports in order to sum up as exhaustively as possible the situation of primary schooling throughout the world.

While reiterating its thanks to Professor García Garrido for the patience, competence and thoroughness with which he has carried out his difficult task, the Secretariat of the IBE would stress that the ideas and opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of Unesco. Moreover, the designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Unesco concerning the legal status of any country or territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

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Introduction

Objectives of this study

The volume now before the reader is devoted entirely to reviewing the situation of primary education throughout the world at the end of the twentieth century and as it will probably appear at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We shall consider structural and functional aspects in particular, so that the reader can form a clear and up-to-date picture of current achievements and problems. However, in the last chapter we shall not fail to mention the main trends, as illustrated in particular by the latest innovations or projects for renewal. To put it briefly, we have tried to offer the reader a report of an overall nature which, in a comprehensive way, can help to bring him up to date concerning the various factors which affect primary education.

The time seemed appropriate for a report of this kind. After the impressive work done in the 1950s by Unesco, which led the publication in 1958 of volume II of *Education in the world* concerning primary education, no other work of general education has been published, although there have been studies of considerable importance aimed at concentrating on various aspects of the subject. The effort made by the International Bureau of Education (IBE) to devote the present volume of its *Yearbook* to a general review of the condition of primary education in the world is a response to a widely felt need. Nevertheless, it was aimed more at providing a comprehensive picture than detailed, country-by-country information. At least this is how those responsible for preparing this modest work understood it.

This book was obviously made possible thanks to the collaboration of many Member States of Unesco during the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education held at Geneva in 1984. Many countries, in fact, sent in a generally complete and well-documented reply to the preparatory questionnaire distributed by the IBE on the 'Universalization and renewal of primary education in the perspective of an appropriate introduction to science and technology'[1]. These questionnaires are referred to in the references at the ends of chapters as 'Q1' and represent the primary documentary material on

which this study is based, although the author has considered it advisable to add other sources which might supplement the data already contributed and in some cases to fill in certain gaps, as well as to draw attention to certain points of a problematic nature. This means that unless otherwise specified, the basic data have been supplied by the reports of countries — i.e. their replies to the above-mentioned questionnaire — although in general the report in question may not necessarily be quoted except when some of its paragraphs are reproduced verbatim. Likewise, we have frequently made use of the national reports prepared by countries on the 'Development of education, 1981-1983'. In the end-of-chapter references, these are referred to by 'NR'. A complete list of these latter reports can be found at the end of volume XXXVII of the *Yearbook* (1985).

The conceptual starting point

The questionnaire referred to above furnished some conceptual explanation to provide adequate guidelines for countries when making their replies. The following was stated concerning what should be understood by 'primary education':

... it may be useful to indicate that, for the purpose of this inquiry only, the term 'primary education' is understood as a basic stage of education which is either a self-contained phase (of various length in various countries) or forms a part of a longer cycle of general education. Primary education may lead to other kinds of post-primary education, whether secondary or not, or to the world of work in some cases. It does not necessarily correspond or equate to the period of compulsory schooling[2].

After this definition, there were some examples of the variety of cases which might occur and the need for making use of the reference criteria referred to above. However, each country was left a wide margin for interpretation, 'with the school starting age ranging from 4 to 8 years and the length of "primary education" from 3 to 7 years'[3].

Some historical comments

There can be no doubt at all about how much primary education owes to the twentieth century. In spite of all this, it is highly probable that in the twenty-first century there will still be an immense part of the earth where primary education has not been universalized, although there can be no doubt that the progress of this universalization has been really spectacular in the course of our own century. In the last third of the last century, the majority of European countries still had large numbers of children who did not attend school. Some of them, such as Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Prussia, were the first to set sizeable goals for school attendance at the primary level. The situation is

the United States of America was similar, although some strata of its population (Negroes and Amerindians in particular) were often excluded from what we might call the 'public interest'. France, which had devoted so much theoretical zeal to the ideal of education for all, especially during the revolutionary years, included the following paragraph in Title I of the Constitution of 1791 concerning this ideal:

A public education system, common to all citizens, shall be created and organized and shall be free of charge with respect to those parts of education which are indispensable for all men, and schools for which shall be gradually extended...'[4].

But the ideal was to take a long time before being realized, in spite of the legislative efforts of Daunou, Guizot, Falloux and Ferry throughout the nineteenth century. It can be said that only after the laws enacted by Ferry was it possible to carry out a programme of primary education for all.

In the United Kingdom, it was necessary to wait until the Foster Elementary Education Act of 1870 for the beginning of a movement of generalized expansion. A start was made before that time in Russia, but without any great effect. During the same period, a Ministry of Education was created in Japan and it was laid down — in the Basic Education Code of 1872 — that 'in the future there shall be no community with an illiterate family, nor any family having an illiterate member'.

All these, and other, pioneer efforts proved fundamental in undertaking a worldwide campaign for extending primary education; a campaign which would have a free field throughout the following century and would achieve considerable goals on a universal scale by the middle of that century. To be sure, it can be said that up to then it had proved impossible to narrow the gap between words and deeds. We must not, in fact, forget that a concern for this problem had been evident for a long time, and not only in Europe and the most developed countries in other parts of the world. In the Latin American continent, for example, there had been an abundance of public statements in favour of primary education for everybody, even since the period prior to independence, but by the middle of the twentieth century the situation still left much to be desired, and even today, as we shall see, it is still a struggle to keep pupils in primary school. In Asia, such movements as Islam and Buddhism have worked intensively to provide elementary education for what are essentially religious purposes, but thanks to their efforts a large part of the population has had access to literacy and culture. Nevertheless, many Asian and practically all African countries, had to approach the question of primary schools later on, and, what is just as important or even more so, through educational institutions which were not indigenous but imported.

Without any doubt, this expansive movement has also led to a more or less thorough revision of the theoretical principles from which the idea of primary

education for everybody had originated. Nevertheless, we consider it appropriate to point out that this process of renovation or renewal has never departed too far from the well-established theory prevailing in the western world. Both concerning the length of time of primary education (years of duration, school entering and leaving ages, etc.), as well as its objectives and functions, there is a basis for agreement going back to the most remote antiquity. We can trace common elements in almost all ancient cultures (Egyptian, Persian, Macedonian, Hebrew, Indian, Chinese). With respect to programming in terms of the length of educational activity, Aristototele wrote that 'Education shall necessarily comprise two different periods of time: from age 7 to puberty and from puberty to age 21'[5].

In ancient Rome, as witnessed by Quintilian among others, the age for entering primary school was still about 7 years. But it was at the age of 11 or 12 that the child left the *primus magister* (note the name) to enter the school of the *grammaticus*, which we might describe today as a secondary or middle-level school. This system remained practically intact throughout the Middle Ages through a whole range of institutions, most of which were of ecclesiastical origin. Among the Muslims, the *maktab* or elementary school generally admitted pupils between ages 6 and 13.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the growing interest taken in education by ecclesiastical and civil authorities (one might recall Luther's appeal to the German princes and the creation of the 'Schools of Piety' and other institutions) did not lead to the introduction of any especially novel conceptual elements with respect to the special features of the first level of education, although it did lead to a favourable trend towards its expansion. However, the work of Comenius proved decisive, both with respect to this expansion and the definition of what were to be, ever since then, the temporal and purposive features of the primary school. In his *Didactica Magna*, first published in 1630, Comenius defined them very clearly:

It is the purpose and object of the common school [as he called it] that all young people between ages 6 and 12 — or 13 — should be instructed in everything useful to life as a whole[6].

Later, in his *Panpaedia*, Comenius again confirmed his original conception, supplementing it with a more detailed discussion of the six years or course comprising the period and, above all, with a viewpoint very close to the idea of lifelong education (*total vita schola est*, as he expressed it).

That marked the beginning of a long historical phase of increasingly more numerous and more detailed experiments and ideas, although the conceptual system proposed by Comenius — as we have seen, on the basis of a long tradition — still remains unchanged to a large extent.

However, it is not our intention to present a summary, however much con-

densed, of this long phase at this point. It would be impossible, in only a few lines, to do justice to the fruitful contributions of Pestalozzi, Herbart, Kerschesteiner, Dewey, Makarenko and so many other famous names, as well as the many organizational and methodological experiments which have been carried out, especially in the last two centuries. There would also not be enough space to describe the terminology they have been using (elementary school, common school, public school, primary school, etc.) or the relationship between primary education and compulsory education.

Lastly, however, we should like to remind the reader of the important contribution which has been made to the quantitative and qualitative development of primary education by certain international organizations, and Unesco in particular. Ever since it was created, Unesco has been working constantly to exchange experience, encourage initial efforts, look for material resources, train human resources and introduce innovations. We are still waiting for adequate research which will reveal the extent and depth of its contribution, especially as far as the developing countries are concerned.

With respect to the International Bureau of Education, we should also remember that ever since it was founded as long ago as 1925, the IBE has regarded primary education as one of its priorities for study. We only have to consider one simple fact: of the seventy-four Recommendations adopted by the International Conference on Education, twenty-one of them have been expressly devoted to aspects of primary education, while twenty-three others relate to primary education together with other levels. In short, this means that 60 per cent of these recommendations concern the primary level. A review of them would certainly be very much called for when undertaking a study like the one now before us[7].

Final observations

We have managed to take full advantage of the abundant information supplied by most of the countries attending the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education. Not all of them, however, sent in replies to the questionnaire, and some of those which did so submitted incomplete answers without referring to specific questions or supplying specific data. This explains why, in some cases, we have had to include a different number of countries in different chapters. On the other hand, we have frequently chosen to select the most significant cases concerning each subject and to avoid unnecessary repetitions. Even so, the reader may perhaps find that there is an excessive number of references to countries. We are fully aware that, in general, it might have been possible to make a better selection. But we have preferred to include too many rather than too few references. It was considered important that the

effort made by the Member States in answering the questionnaire should be properly reflected in this study.

Throughout this work, we have been able to rely on the invaluable assistance of the specialists in the International Bureau of Education. We should now and at this point like to thank them for their suggestions, their help in providing bibliographical and documentary material and their constant willingness to co-operate. However, we have to add that, in view of the complete freedom from which we have benefited in preparing this book, only the author is responsible for any defects and shortcomings which might be found by the reader.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Unesco. *Universalization and renewal of primary education in the perspective of an appropriate introduction to science and technology*. Geneva, IBE; Paris, Unesco, 1983. 8 p. (ED BIE CONFINTED 39/Q1/83; ED.83/WS/36) [IBE microfiche SIRE 01927]
2. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Cf. Ponteil, F. *Histoire de l'enseignement en France: les grandes étapes, 1789-1964*. Paris: Sirey, 1966. 454 p.
5. Aristotle. *Politics*, with an English translation by H. Rackham. London, Heinemann; Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1959, Book VII, chapter XV, p. 633.
6. Keatinge, M.W. *The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius, translated into English and edited with biographical, historical and critical introductions*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Russel & Russel, 1910, 1967, Part II, p. 268.
7. International Conference on Education, 3rd—37th session. Geneva, 1934—1977. *Recommendations, 1934—1977*. Paris, Unesco, 1979. 430 p. (The Recommendations of the three subsequent conferences have been published as individual leaflets.)

CHAPTER I

Policy and administration of primary education

I. THE STATE AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

Even admitting a decline in their efforts in recent years, it is obvious that the interest taken by States in primary education has been gradually increasing throughout the twentieth century. In former times, there were certainly other levels of education, not yet given final form, which attracted the greatest attention from the higher social classes and public authorities. But the need for spreading basic culture among all strata of the population has impelled nations to give priority to this first educational level. Today, even the earliest countries to achieve universal primary education share the conviction that, educationally speaking, this level constitutes a permanent priority for State action.

This does not necessarily mean that State intervention in this sector always tends to increase and become far reaching. Further on we shall see that, on the contrary, quite a few countries are working with processes aimed at granting a greater degree of responsibility and participation to various social forces, including the schools themselves. What it does mean is that there is an acceptance by the State of the fact that primary or elementary education is a responsibility which concerns it as a matter of priority, especially with regard to ensuring that it is universal. In this respect, it is important to observe the conceptual trend brought about by *compulsory* school attendance which, from being applied merely to the population as a passive subject, is now also applied — and mainly so — to the State as an active subject. The Panamanian report clearly refers to this point when it explains that ‘the compulsory nature of education refers not only to the child’s obligation to receive it but also to the State’s obligation to provide it’[1]. Whether expressly or tacitly, this idea also underlies the reports of many Member States of Unesco presented at the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education.

The importance attached by States to primary education is clearly proved by the fact that, for the majority of them, their concern about it has become a duty assuming a *constitutional* character. Actually, there are many constitutions or basic laws which refer in some way either to primary education itself or to

some basic or elementary education which more or less includes it. From these constitutional mandates numerous legislative acts have been derived which openly refer to the objectives and organization of primary education within the education system.

Africa

During the 1970s, most of the developing countries went through a stage of extensive legislation and considerable efforts aimed at financing and expanding State action at the primary level. This is particularly apparent in the case of the young African nations. In some of them, the State has assumed a monopoly not only of policy making with regard to primary education but even of its actual administration.

- In Angola, the Constitutional Law clearly provides (articles 13 and 29) that the duty and right to teach children is exclusively incumbent on the State. Furthermore, a law enacted in 1975 decreed the nationalization of education at all levels and grades.
- Likewise in Mozambique, following independence in 1975, all schools were immediately nationalized, in spite of the fact that many primary schools for the local population were operated by Catholic missionaries. A Law enacted in 1983, establishing a national system of education based on Marxism-Leninism, provides for seven years of compulsory primary education.
- In the Congo, it is the State, under the direction of the Congolese Labour Party, which assumes the exclusive direction and administration of education at all levels. This policy was confirmed by the Law for Reorganizing the Education System, enacted in 1980, which establishes a 'people's school', including a basic cycle of ten years as the period of compulsory education.
- Ethiopia issued a 'Proclamation for the public ownership of private schools in 1975, which eliminated many schools operated by private individuals. However, this movement did not affect the many 'mission schools' which still exist in the country at the primary education level, representing approximately 20 per cent of the total. All in all, the 'Programme of the Democratic National Revolution' (1976) reveals the State's determination to assume greater responsibility for educating the people on every occasion.
- Article 131 of the Ordinance which is considered the Basic Law of Benin provides that 'the State shall, by stages, bring about compulsory and free education; it shall gradually establish new schools and new cultural institutions', and in short ensure the right to education for all citizens[2].

But this strengthening of State responsibility has not occurred solely in those African States governed by regimes based on socialist ideas. The great majority of the other countries have also witnessed an obvious increase in State concern and State intervention without this leading to the disappearance of the contribution made by private initiative and especially by religious institutions, a contribution which in many cases is protected by law and encouraged by public subsidies.

- In Burundi, State responsibility increased considerably after the first Congress of the UPRONA Party held in 1979.

- After attaining independence in 1966, Botswana paid closer attention to primary education, which was largely managed by the Church. But State involvement has increased considerably in recent years, while at the same time State aid has been forthcoming to religious schools.
- The Côte d'Ivoire has also witnessed an increase in State action, especially following the enactment of the 'Education Reform Law' of 1977, which provided for basic education for a period of ten years. There are subsidies for private education.
- In Gabon, there has been greater delay in restructuring the traditional education system, modelled on the French system, which has remained stable since the Law of 1966. But in 1983 the so-called 'Estates General of Education and Instruction' were made public, thus tending towards a gradual change in the system.
- In 1961, Ghana had already established compulsory and free primary education, subsequently confirmed by the 1969 Constitution. Later, in 1974, the 'New Structure and Content of Education in Ghana' was made public. And in 1982 appeared another important document which shows the renewal of State concern: 'Guidelines for a National Education Policy'.
- In Kenya, the 1963 Manifesto introduced the idea of universal and free primary education. But the most important legislative act was the 1968 Education Law, amended in 1980. There is much participation by private initiative, as well as by local communities.
- For Liberia, the objective of achieving universal basic education was already expressed in the 'National Education Plan for 1978-1990', drawn up in 1977. Later, in 1984, the National Education Conference reiterated the need for the State to give preferential treatment to this objective. It should be remembered that Liberia has a large number of mission schools (approximately 20 per cent) and private schools (15 per cent).
- The Constitution of Mauritius guarantees fundamental rights, including that of education. The current education system and the status of private education are based on the 1957 Ordinance respecting education, which had been drawn up eleven years before the country attained independence. At the present time, there is a reform under study which will apparently strengthen the responsibility of the State. Private initiative is making a large contribution, since 20 per cent of the primary schools are religious and subsidized by the State, in addition to other private schools.
- In 1976, Nigeria decreed the establishment of universal and free primary education, which was confirmed one year later by the so-called 'New National Education Policy'. The State is still trying to bring about compulsory school attendance at the primary level. The participation of local communities in the country is very strong at the primary school level. There is also an important sector of private education.
- In its article 27, the Rwandese Constitution establishes free and compulsory primary education, while article 26 guarantees freedom of education. The greatest legislative effort was made in 1979 by the enactment of a National Education Law.
- In Senegal, the 'Law for the direction of National Education' of 1971 continues to provide the legal framework justifying many activities carried out by the State, which subsidizes a number of private and religious educational centres.
- Although on a considerably smaller geographic scale, Seychelles is also working actively on the infrastructure which will make possible universal primary education for nine years, which was declared compulsory in 1977.
- In the United Republic of Tanzania, the basic documents controlling primary education are the so-called 'Education for Self-Reliance' of 1967 and the Musoma Resolutions of 1974; the latter established seven years of compulsory primary education. The 1978 Education Law legalized these measures and perfected the framework. There is participation by private initiative.

- In Togo, the Education Reform of 1975 brought about an important change and greater awareness on the part of the public authorities.
- The Constitution of Uganda supplies guidelines for educational activity which were fully developed in the 1970 Education Law. Although seven years of primary education are not yet compulsory or free, an effort is being made to make it universal and 85 per cent of school attendance is expected by 1990.
- In 1983, Zambia decreed basic education for a period of nine years, the first seven of which are for primary education and are compulsory. The present number of private schools is small.
- Title II of the Constitution of Zaire contains various articles relating to education. Among them, Article 20 provides that 'the education of young people shall be carried out on a national basis. National education shall comprise both public schools and authorized private schools'[3]. Other documents of the Revolutionary People's Movement, the State party, reveal the effort which the authorities want to make to disseminate primary education.
- Zimbabwe, which has been independent since 1980, is also devoting considerable efforts to primary education, especially by unifying the two school networks it has inherited (for whites and blacks). There is an appreciable contribution by private initiative at the primary level.

Asia

In every case, the nations of Asia have also witnessed a strengthening of State responsibility with regard to primary education. Nevertheless, this movement has not always gone so far as to make education compulsory for their citizens. In quite a few Asian nations, primary education is still not compulsory for the population.

- In Bangladesh, the five years of primary education are not compulsory, although the authorities are making considerable efforts to increase the percentage of children of ages 6 to 10 who attend school, a percentage which today hovers around 66 per cent, but which nevertheless does not reflect the large proportion of drop-outs. Among the objectives of the Second Five-Year Plan (1980-85) there was, in particular, one of ensuring that at least 50 per cent of children should complete five years of primary school. Private initiative is still collaborating to a large extent with the collective effort, and a large number of primary classes are directed by religious (Islamic) authorities, many of them in the madrasahs.
- The Islamic Republic of Iran is strenuously preserving the principle that education should not be compulsory. In its report, we read that 'to force the people to send their children to school is not a part of educational policy'[4], although the State and religious authorities supply the necessary educational facilities for those who request them. In primary education, which lasts for five years between the ages of 6 and 11, the principle of (religious) purification takes priority over that of instruction.
- Nepal has recently raised the duration of primary education to five years (usually between the ages of 6 and 11). Although it is free and theoretically universal, it is nevertheless not compulsory. The existing private schools are legally part of the National Education System.
- In Pakistan, where primary education is not compulsory either, only 50 per cent of children of that age attend school at this level which lasts for five years (66 per cent boys and 33 per cent girls). The collaboration of private initiative, generally of an English-speaking character, does not form a significant part of the general effort.

- Sri Lanka also preserves the principle that education should not be compulsory, but in spite of this, 98 per cent of the corresponding age group are enrolled in primary school, which since 1978 lasts for six years (ages 6 to 12). Various important laws (especially those of 1947 and 1960) have considerably reduced the number of private schools, which today teach **barely 2 per cent of the school population.**
- Malaysia is another nation which, although also having a relatively high level of education, has not adopted the principle of compulsory education. In spite of this, every child between the ages of 6 and 12 is guaranteed a place in primary school for six years, which is generally a State school or financed by the State. Schools financed exclusively by private means are rare.

However, many other nations of Asia and Oceania have been applying — some of them already for several decades — the system of compulsory education, which, in the case of the more developed countries, goes beyond primary education.

- The Constitution which followed India's independence (1947) established the principle of free, universal and compulsory education up to age 14. In a country so complicated and so full of contrasts, this objective has been reached only to a limited extent. Nevertheless, the State, which is responsible for providing education, has made spectacular progress in expanding primary education. This expansion is being considerably helped by the establishment of centres for non-formal education. A recent document published by the government emphasizes that 'elementary education is the most crucial stage in education, covering the first eight years of school attendance and laying down the foundation for the pupils' personality, attitudes, social confidence, habits, learning skills and capacity for communication'[5]. The document again recalls that this principle 'has been accepted since the very beginning of the Republic in the form of article 45 of the Constitution, which lays down the Guiding Principles of State Policy. This was reiterated in 1968 in the Resolution on National Education Policy'[6].
- China has now managed to increase the percentage of children entering primary school to 93 per cent, although, as stated in its report[7]: 'Primary education in many rural areas of China has not been universalized'. In accordance with the mandates of the Constitution, a Law on Compulsory Primary Education is now being prepared, a level now lasting five or six years in the country, depending on different areas, and which corresponds to the compulsory period.
- Viet Nam requires that any person who has been unable to complete the five years of compulsory primary education between ages 6 and 11 must do so subsequently up to age 15.
- In Indonesia, the obligation to complete primary education applies for a period of six years to all children who have reached the age of 8, although it is common for children to enter school earlier — at age 6. There is considerable collaboration by private initiative, especially of a religious nature.
- In the Republic of Korea, compulsory primary education for six years has been free since 1979. As a result of the efforts made by the State, with the help of private organisms, the rate of school enrolment is close to 100 per cent.
- In Thailand, the primary level (six years from age 6 to 12) has been compulsory since 1921. Collaboration by private initiative is significant, although still modest (less than 8 per cent of children are taught in private schools).
- In Japan, even fewer children attend private primary schools (approximately 0.7 per cent). Inasmuch as compulsory primary education was already established in the last century (in 1886), it has now become completely universal.

- This has also been the case in Australia, where, as in Japan, compulsory school attendance also extends to the first cycle of secondary education. But in Australia there is considerable collaboration with private initiative: 21.3 per cent of all children attend private primary schools.
- For a long time, New Zealand has been working in the same direction and has succeeded in enforcing universal primary education, which is only the first stage (six or seven years) of the ten years of compulsory school attendance. About 10 per cent of pupils attend private schools (most of which are Catholic).

The Arab States

Among the Arab countries, compulsory primary education is common, except in Qatar and Tunisia, where, in the opinion of their governments, it is unnecessary to enact express legislation concerning compulsory primary education since it is, in fact, already universal (with some exceptions, often with respect to girls in rural areas). In most of them, the period of primary education is for six years, beginning with age 6. But in Morocco it is for five years, between ages 6 and 12, although compulsory school attendance does not end until age 14. In other countries too, such as Jordan and Algeria, the length of compulsory education exceeds that of the period of primary education (nine years in both cases). In other countries, such as Egypt, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, the period of compulsory education and that for primary education are the same.

As far as the principle of free primary education is concerned, it is applied by all the Arab countries without exception in the State schools. In this respect, the words of article 37 of the Constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic (1973) are quite representative: 'Education is a right guaranteed by the State. All of its cycles are free of charge and the primary cycle is compulsory'[8]. Bahrain, for example, in 1977 enacted a 'Law respecting Private Education' which prescribes the rights and duties of this sector under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. In spite of this, the Constitution states that it is the fundamental duty of the State 'to provide education for all children of school age'[9].

This does not mean that the principle of free education is also applied in the private schools of all countries in the area. In the Syrian Arab Republic itself, as well as in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, etc., there are private schools which are still mainly financed by their immediate beneficiaries. Schools founded by religious initiative are quite frequently financed or assisted by the State. It should be remembered that the collaboration of the religious authorities, especially at the primary level, has sometimes become customary. In Morocco, for example, many children attend Koranic schools, both at the pre-school and primary level, and then later (around age 10) join the regular primary schools. In Egypt, there is also considerable participation by the so-called *Al-Azhar* schools.

Only Algeria and Iraq have applied a policy of the absolute nationalization of education. In Iraq in 1974, all subsidized and private schools were nationalized; subsequent legislation (most significantly in 1976 and 1978) has not introduced any important changes. As far as Algeria is concerned, the Ordinance of 1976 in its article 10 declares explicitly that 'the education system comes exclusively within the competence of the State. No individual or collective initiative may exist outside the boundaries defined by this Ordinance'[10].

However, as we have said, it is more common to find collaboration with private initiative, although it does not account for a really large proportion of schools in any of the Arab countries. In Egypt, for example, the law calls on all social forces to collaborate[11].

Latin America and the Caribbean

Considerable efforts have been made in Latin America to make primary education genuinely universal, although much still remains to be done.

The history of most of the Latin American countries is rich in endeavours to make education free and compulsory, which has accustomed the population to use these terms more as utopian projects than as any reflection of reality. To give simply one example, which is sufficiently representative of the whole, we only have to consider the case of Paraguay. Since independence in 1811, compulsory primary education was decreed by Rodriguez de Francia in 1828, by Lopez in 1844, by the Constitution of 1870, by the Law of 1887, by the Compulsory Education Law of 1909, by the subsequent law of 1924, by the Constitution of 1940 and, lastly, by the current Constitution of 1967. The latter provides for a minimum period of six years (between ages 7 and 14), but the Law of 1909 provided for a longer period, from ages 5 to 15. As we have said, similar dispositions have also occurred in other countries of the continent.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that there has been an intensification of genuine efforts in recent decades. More than anything else, this has involved increasing State involvement, as can be seen in most of the current constitutions and in other legislative texts issued since 1965 in particular.

Generally speaking, primary education is compulsory in all countries of this region for a period which in most of them is generally six years. Exceptions are Argentina, with seven years of compulsory primary education, Brazil, whose first-grade education (to use the original terminology) has been extended to eight years since 1971, and Chile which twenty years ago had already replaced its old six-year primary education by a 'general basic education of eight years'. In Colombia, on the contrary, the period corresponding to primary education

covers only five years of school attendance, as the first part of a 'basic education' lasting nine years in all. All the other countries, as we have said, agree in allotting six years to primary education, although in some cases they extend compulsory education beyond this point.

As a result of these efforts, it has actually been possible to put most of the child population in school. The enrolment of children, especially in the first years of education, has been increasing considerably and is now at levels which, in general, could be considered acceptable. The real problem, which we will deal with in greater detail in Chapter V, is the high percentage of drop-outs. In Mexico, for example, the 1982 statistics still showed a figure of more than 45 per cent for drop-outs; in Colombia it was higher still, almost 62 per cent. In Nicaragua, there is no longer any attempt to ensure that children complete the full primary cycle, only to ensure that they complete the first four years of education. The only country which explicitly states that it has no problems with school drop-outs, at least in significant figures, is Cuba; in its national report we can read that 'there is a minimum of drop-outs and they are brought about by health reasons or to a lesser extent by other causes'[12]. In some Caribbean countries, such as Bahamas or Guyana, there seem to be rather few drop-outs.

In almost all nations in the continent, there has been reliance on the participation of private initiative in primary education, although the proportion of private schools at this level does not compare with the figure reached at the other levels (pre-school, secondary, university). The exception is Cuba, where all centres are State-operated. In all countries, the majority of private centres are religious schools (almost always operated by Catholic congregations and associations), and they are frequently granted subsidies if the education provided by them is more or less free of charge. (This is the case in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.) However, it is very common for some centres to require their pupils to pay tuition fees. In Jamaica, together with the customary State primary schools, there are still the so-called 'preparator schools' of the British type, which are for the most part intended for the children of the well-to-do classes. Participation by the private sector in primary education never reaches any figures comparable with those of the State sector; in Colombia, for example, the number of children attending private centres is approximately 14 per cent of the total; in Venezuela, 12 per cent.

Europe and North America

The fact that almost all European nations have for some time enjoyed universal primary education has nevertheless not led to any extension of the efforts made by the State at this level. Although quantitative requirements

have already become stabilized and have even begun to decrease, those of a qualitative nature, which are even more expensive, have continued to weigh heavily when it came to budgets, reforms, attempts at renovation, research and public opinion.

If we simply take primary education in its broad sense, that is to say as a 'basic education' which also covers what is properly the first cycle of secondary education, we still might find that there are some defects in making primary education universal or generally available in a few European countries. This might be considered to be the case in Portugal, where approximately 11 per cent of the pupils discontinue their studies after completing the first four years of education. In Turkey, the percentage of children attending school between ages 12 and 14 is only 55 per cent, although we must take into account the fact that only since 1983 has education up to age 15 (from age 6) been made legally compulsory.

However, although school drop-outs do not represent a major problem in the European countries, what certainly is a problem is the question of failure in school, as shown by grade repetition. In Spain, for example, it is believed that about 40 per cent of pupils who complete their 'basic general education' do so without having achieved the minimum goals laid down in the curriculum. In this same country, the percentage of repeaters, again with reference to compulsory education as a whole (6 to 14 years), reaches the considerable figure of 12 per cent. In France, and here only with respect to primary education properly speaking, a great effort is being made to reduce the present percentage, which is close to 9 per cent. Belgium also shows a high percentage of repeaters. But even countries with lower percentages, such as the Federal Republic of Germany or Switzerland (around 2 per cent), are much concerned to lower or even eliminate these figures. We could find similar percentages in the Eastern European countries. However, it is very difficult to determine the concrete significance of these percentages in relation to any higher or lower quality of education. What occurs in certain countries is explicitly stated in Denmark's report: 'In primary education there is practically no drop-out or repetition for the simple reason that there are no examinations in the primary school'[13]. Not all countries nor all specialists are in agreement that the solution to the problem lies in the complete elimination of examinations. We shall return to this important problem in due time.

The duration of primary education in the European countries varies considerably from place to place. In Switzerland alone there are three different periods, of four, five and six years respectively, although the latter is most common. The same could also be said of Western Europe as a whole: this level lasts for six years in Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Luxembourg, Malta and the United Kingdom. In France, as in the Netherlands or San Marino, five years

are required. The minimum duration is found in the Federal Republic of Germany (with the exception of some cities including, on an experimental basis, Hamburg) and Austria; likewise Portugal, although the period following it — 'preparatory education' — is frequently considered to be primary education as well. Beyond six years, there is the case of Denmark, which recognizes the first seven years of its nine years of compulsory education as primary education, the case of Ireland (eight years) and that of Turkey (eight years). In this last case, as well as in that of Spain, it is open to discussion whether only the first five years of school attendance should be considered as primary education (in Turkey there are, in fact, primary schools which last for only five years) instead of the whole cycle of compulsory or basic education, which lasts for eight years.

With regard to the countries of Eastern Europe, most of them have adopted the scheme of a single general school in which there is no important distinction between primary and secondary education. There are still primary schools lasting only three years in the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR, and for other reasons and by the express acknowledgement of the educational authorities themselves, we can state that primary education there lasts for three years (between ages 7 and 10), although the Soviet educational reform of 1984 has provided for an additional year below that level, beginning at age 6. Bulgaria is also making a gradual transition towards starting primary education at age 6, while today its duration could be set at three or four years (although we have to take into account that the report speaks of 'first grade' with reference to the first ten years of the unified general school). Czechoslovakia, which introduced compulsory education for ten years starting with the 1984/85 course, still retains the eight years of primary school established by the reform of 1953. The Hungarian 'general school', which is frequently considered as a primary education school, also lasts for eight years, although the term is also often applied to the first four years of the general school. The Law respecting Education and Teaching of 1978, still in force today in Romania, provides that primary education is also that education which covers the first four years of compulsory education. Poland, on the contrary, does not make any distinction in this case and labels its eight-year general school (ages 7 to 15) as 'primary school'. Yugoslavia considers primary education and elementary education to be synonymous, and therefore recognizes that it should last for eight years (from ages 6 to 14, or from 7 to 15, according to different parts of the country).

For some time, both the United States and Canada have established primary or elementary education lasting six or eight years as the first part of their compulsory education, which lasts for approximately ten years.

But now we must pass on to another important aspect of our study. Except for

those under a socialist regime, all States in Europe and North America can count on the participation of private initiative in organizing and administering primary education. In most of them (especially the religious schools) private schools are subsidized by the public authorities, either covering the total costs or almost total cost of services down to the payment of specific items, such as for the teaching faculty, supervisory charges, etc. However, it must be made clear that participation by private initiative in primary education is usually less than that available at other levels, such as the pre-school or secondary. Among the countries where there is greater participation, we must include Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. In the United States, private participation at this level affects approximately 10 per cent of all pupils entering school. In the Federal Republic of Germany and in the Scandinavian countries, private participation is considerably less, although it seems to be increasing (as is the case in Sweden, where only 3 per cent of the pupils attend private schools). In Italy, 'from 1975 on, the proportion of pupils in private schools has diminished regularly. At primary level, the percentage dropped from 7.6 to 6.9.... However, in recent years, the curve has dipped sharply'[14]. In almost all cases, the public authorities reserve the right to control and inspect private educational establishments; in some countries, such as Turkey, there is a special department within the Ministry of Education which is expressly concerned with this task; but it is more common (in Greece, Spain, etc.) for private and State schools to be supervised by the same authorities.

Lastly, it is interesting to point out that a certain stability seems to have been brought about in the relationship between public and private institutions. Contrary to what used to occur not too long ago, today there do not seem to be any confrontations between the State and private initiative, especially concerning questions of a religious nature. Perhaps we should make an exception of a few new offshoots born of ancient polemics in some southern European countries, although it would not seem that such discords are likely to go too far.

2 TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Since primary education is the school level which affects the most widespread groups in the population, it has always required the participation of the local authorities in all aspects concerning its organization. Nevertheless, this participation is very far from being the same thing everywhere. While there are countries where the local or municipal communities, however small, take responsibility for all the principal features of their primary schools, there are also others where the communities and their authorities confine themselves to

merely witnessing what is decided, planned, administered and controlled by the State, the province or other intermediate entities. In this case, all they are asked for is their agreement or their moral support. It is certainly true that because of their extreme poverty, the limited educational background of their authorities or for both of these reasons at the same time, there are some small local communities which have been unable to do much more. But it is also true that in quite a few cases what began by being a necessity which might have been overcome over the years has become a confirmed habit. In other words the State continues at times to monopolize educational activities which could be properly managed by smaller administrative units. And this certainly does not occur only in countries with low economic and cultural development but also in prosperous and distinguished nations.

We should not forget another factor of undoubted importance which always encourages centralizing government policies. Movements of acculturation and enlightenment have always pursued objectives which went beyond those of any small local community. The religious teachers or missionaries who initiated popular education in a particular community brought substantially the same message to their villages and on behalf of this message made use of what were largely uniform means. This is still more obvious when we refer to the birth and consolidation of modern nations. To mould feelings which were largely subject to local claims into a unanimous national sentiment made it necessary, in some way, to distrust local forces at the time when educational institutions were being organized, since the latter were supposed to serve as potential instruments of national unification. This is what had already happened to the old civilized nations two centuries ago and which occurred once again only a few decades ago in the nations which had recently become independent.

To put it briefly, we can say that in the heart of all modern States there is always an inborn element of educational centralization, which for many reasons (including that of giving coherence to the whole education system) also strongly impinges on the level of primary education. However, the present state of affairs offers us a certain variety of models with respect to the government and administration of primary education. In the following pages we shall refer to some of the most widespread of them, pointing out, in so far as possible, not only their variants but also their isomorphisms.

Assuming, as an organizational criterion, the degree of participation in primary education by the various territorial units of government, we can distinguish the following types, which are fairly traditional: (a) administration on a centralized basis; (b) administration on a regional basis; and (c) administration in a process of change.

Administration on a centralized basis

The majority of the world's countries can be said to belong to this type of administration. As we shall see, it is not easy to define its basic characteristics precisely, since many countries which at first glance might seem to be centralized actually possess forms of local administration, while others with a more regionalized or local tradition today contain important forces which are exerting pressure in favour of centralization. As Brian Holmes correctly pointed out:

It is unwise to assert categorically that a system of educational administration is either *centralized* or *decentralized*. The allocation of responsibility for the formulation, adoption and implementation of policy is specific to each level and issue or aspect of education [15].

Here, of course, we are going to take account above all of what concerns primary education, but it will be impossible to avoid referring to other levels occasionally.

Two fundamental reference models can be established here: that of the French pattern and that found in countries with a socialist system, often defined as 'democratic centralism'.

On many occasions France has been pointed out as the most clear-cut model of educational centralization in the Western world. This does not mean that it has never depended on, or still does not depend on, the participation in the education system of other territorial institutions which are not State organs. As we shall see, this participation has always existed and has become on every occasion more apparent at the level with which we are concerned. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that this participation is basically aimed at *seconding*, at putting into practice, decisions taken at the peak of a distinctly pyramidal administration.

In France, all basic decisions concerning primary education (curricula, appointments of teachers, executive and supervisory personnel, location of schools, etc.) emanate from the Ministry of National Education, although a recent trend towards functional deconcentration has given increasing importance to the *département* (territorial division) and the person who is fundamentally responsible in the area concerning us, the *inspecteur d'académie*, the director of the departmental services (it will be recalled that France today has ninety-five *départements*, not including those overseas).

Under different names and to a different extent, this has also been the usual administrative scheme in other European countries, especially in Mediterranean Europe:

- In 1970, Italy opened the way to an administrative regionalization, which nevertheless for the time being has not had too many consequences in the educational field and, more specifically, in primary education. The latter is still substantially dependent on the Ministry of Public Education and its Directorate General of Elementary Education. The so-called

provveditori agli studi in the provinces have functions which, although they have increased considerably in recent times, are still purely executive and delegated from above.

- Greece still preserves its enduring structure, decision making being centralized in the Ministry of National Education and Culture, which for purposes of primary (and secondary) education is in charge of fifteen areas, each of them under an inspector general. These areas are in turn divided into sectors, directed by an administering inspector.
- In Portugal, educational activity is centred in the districts and municipalities, but is absolutely dependent on the Ministry of Education and its Directorate General of Basic Education.
- In spite of the fact that the 1978 Constitution opened up new prospects in Spain, primary education is still to a large extent organized and administered by the Ministry of Education and Science through the Directorate General of Basic Education.
- Turkey has also been endeavouring to deconcentrate educational functions, although always under a centralized administration in the Ministry of Education and, within the latter, in the Department of Preprimary and Primary Education. At an adjacent level, both the prefectures and the sub-prefectures have their own directorates of education, which are those responsible for complying with the rules laid down for primary education.

Among the administrative structures with a centralized basis, we must also include, as is only logical in this case, those of some small European countries such as Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and San Marino.

Let us now take a brief look at the second of the groups referred to above: the countries under a socialist régime. As far as primary education is concerned, the practice of 'democratic centralism', which is provided for under the constitutions of all countries in this group, presupposes the active presence of the central organs of the Communist party and the government in everything relating to the policy and general programming of the primary level, although a great many management tasks are delegated to the territorial organs of the various republics, regions, provinces, etc.

- In the USSR, 'leadership is centralized through the department of municipal or district education, under the control of the provincial department of education, which in turn is directly responsible to the Minister of Education or to the Republic. This system jointly covers financial responsibility, management and control'[16].
- The Ukrainian SSR's report states that 'the entire system of education is centralized although the curricula and textbooks are designed to reflect the characteristics of the Republic'[17].
- 'The Council of Ministers of the GDR is responsible for the centralized planning and management of all institutions of education'[18].
- In Czechoslovakia, 'The Ministry of Education issues the generally binding legal provisions on constitution and abolition as well as on the organization of schools [...] The Ministry of Education sets the rules for the ideological and pedagogical management of schools'[19].
- In Poland, 'the system is centralized: the State is the one responsible for putting into practice the child's right to education. The school is a State school and dependent on the educational administration of the State'[20].
- In Romania, 'the administration and management of education is based on two basic principles: (a) the existence of a central directorate which is closely associated with the local

- initiatives and local powers of the authority of the State and the educational establishments; (b) work and leadership in a collective spirit'[21].
- 'The organization of the entire education system in Bulgaria, including primary education, is centralized'[22].
 - Leaving aside the case of Yugoslavia, a country with which we shall deal farther on, only Hungary refers to the fact that there is a certain degree of decentralization in its administrative structure, within a general centralized framework: 'The types of schools, educational objectives, curricula and programmes are all defined centrally. At the same time, local bodies have an increasing role in running the schools; the levels of educational service depends more and more on these bodies. ... Hungarian educational management has both centralized and decentralized features'[23].

As far as the Arab countries are concerned, although not all of them have been equally influenced by administration of the French type, it can be said that they all started with a basically centralized structure, which to a large extent they still preserve. At the Conference of Arab Ministers of Education and Planning, convened by Unesco in 1977, attention was drawn to the need for decentralization, or at least a deconcentration of functions.

The conference placed stress on the fact that it is necessary to decentralize the management decisions and control at present at the central level, because such decentralization makes the administration less oppressive and opens the way for the population to participate in the management of local educational institutions.[24]

Some of this has undoubtedly been achieved in recent years. However, as far as primary education is concerned (and on an even broader scale at other levels), we still have to speak of administrative structures which are substantially centralized, as can be seen in Table 1.

In the African continent, a majority of the nations practise a more or less pronounced centralization of primary education. Once again, it is necessary to pay attention to the actual organizational policies and not to interpret too literally certain valuations contained in the reports or even in legislation, since they frequently reflect a wish rather than a reality.

Properly speaking, only one African nation — Nigeria — can be categorized as decentralized in the field concerning us here. Perhaps Zimbabwe might also be included, since the primary schools which are subject there to the direct control of the central government represent a majority (7 per cent of the total). The other countries range from a certain decentralization in specific aspects to almost absolute centralization. Burundi, for example, leaves a wide margin of autonomy to the cantonal authorities in many details concerning primary education, but some other important ones are dependent on the central government, while secondary education is completely centralized. The reports of some countries (Benin, Gabon, United Republic of Tanzania) list decentralized education systems or their sub-systems of primary education, but they seem rather to refer to what here we have understood as 'deconcentration'. To sum up, and leaving aside basic political differences, we might say about one

TABLE 1. Systems of educational administration in the Arab States

Country	General policy	Central organs	Peripheral organs
Algeria	Basically centralized	Ministry of Education	Directorate of Education (one in each one of the 48 <i>wilaya</i> in the country)
Egypt	Basic decisions taken by the central government, but with participation at the provincial level	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Al-Azhar Affairs, which is concerned with religious education	Provincial Directorates of Education. Local councils.
Iraq	Basically centralized	Ministry of Education and, within it, the Directorate General of Primary Education (likewise the Ministry of Local Supervision for administrative matters)	Director General of Education in each province
Jordan	Centralized, although the Law of 1964 opened the way to some functional de centralization	Ministry of Education	Director of Education in each district Local educational offices
Morocco	Centralized	Ministry of National Education and Directorate of Primary Education	Executive regional and provincial administrations
Qatar	Centralized with regard to decisions, with some executive deconcentration	Ministry of Education	
Saudi Arabia	Centralized	Ministry of Education and Administration of Women's Education	
Syrian Arab Republic	Essentially centralized, but deconcentrated with respect to management, supervision and general policy	Ministry of Education	Directors of Education in the Departments
Tunisia	Basically centralized, with a tendency towards deconcentration	Ministry of National Education, Directorate of Primary Education	Regional delegations of Primary Education Inspectorates

large group of countries what Mozambique's report says about its own system:

We can consider that it is a centralized system from the normative point of view and decentralized from the executive point of view[25].

In most cases, the central organ in charge of primary education is a part of a ministry covering all educational levels, which is usually called the 'Ministry of Education' (Central African Republic, Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia) or 'Ministry of National Education' (Burundi, Cameroon, Gabon, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania). In certain countries, this ministry also has authority in the cultural field, and is consequently called 'Ministry of Education and Culture', or 'of Cultural Affairs'; this is the case in Malawi, Mauritius and Zimbabwe. The latter country, however, has divided the functions of promoting and controlling the schools between two ministries: that of 'Education and Culture' and that of 'Local Administration and Civic Planning'. Something similar exists in Botswana, where together with the Ministry of Education there is a Ministry of Local Administration and Territories. While the former is concerned with educational policy, curricula, inspection, teaching faculty, etc., the latter provides the necessary physical facilities. On the other hand, the existence of two ministries concerned with education is a reality in some countries, such as Benin, Madagascar, Rwanda and Togo. In Madagascar and Rwanda, the sector concerning us here comes within a ministry which also includes secondary but not higher education. In Benin, there is a ministry specifically concerned with 'Maternal and Basic Education'. And in Togo, vocational and technical education has been placed under a separate ministry of its own.

If we pass on from central administration to consider peripheral or regional administration, we find a wide variety of names which actually cover a number of pronounced isomorphisms. We must especially stress the fact that in most cases these are peripheral units of the central authority, i.e. representatives of that authority in regions, provinces, territories and population centres with exclusively or predominantly executive functions. Even some countries which describe their educational administration as decentralized in their reports nevertheless prove the purely vicarious character of their peripheral administrations. The United Republic of Tanzania, for example, when defining the function of its regional education officers, describes them as 'spokesmen of the Ministry of National Education in the regions'[26], and says the same thing later about its district officers. In Benin, the offices of the provincial directorates of education in the country's six provinces in fact replace, on a smaller scale, the technical directorates of the central ministry. In Burundi, the inspectors in charge of the eight school regions, or the twenty-six school cantons under them form a pyramid whose decision-making apex is to be

found in the Ministry of National Education. The same thing applies even more so to the countries with the most pronounced centralization. In general terms, most of the countries have peripheral services of a regional and provincial character (for example, like those found in the *Faritany* of Madagascar or in the *Awraja* of Ethiopia), although occasionally there are also administrative offices in smaller districts (territories, sectors, precincts). These services are directed by specific officials and frequently by inspectors of primary education.

With some exceptions, which we shall analyse in due course, the Asian nations also show a tendency towards centralized administrative structures although efforts have been made to achieve a greater deconcentration of functions. This is the case in Bangladesh, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Pakistan, despite the fact that it constitutes a federation, has entrusted many important functions to its Federal Ministry of Education and, more specifically, to the sectors concerned with primary education. The peripheral organisms (provincial and divisional directorates, as well as the district offices) are almost always limited to seconding the measures taken by the federal ministry; however, it should be borne in mind that in addition to the network of State primary schools, there is a considerable number of schools which are dependent on the municipal authorities. China, which enjoys a long tradition of participation in primary education, has been increasing the powers of the central Ministry of Education, where decisions are taken about the most important subjects. However, there would still appear to be a significant margin of decision-making in the regional, provincial and local offices. Something similar could be said about Viet Nam. To sum up, most countries in the area could, in one way or another, share the following considerations taken from the report of the Republic of Korea:

Administration of primary education is nominally undertaken at the city and provincial board of education and the office of education level. However, their capacity to fully manage and administer is actually quite feeble, both from the financial standpoint and in actual administration of the curriculum. Thus it can be observed that the Ministry of Education is the organization exercising jurisdiction through a centralization of authority *de facto*[27].

The normal practice is for these countries to have a single Ministry — generally called 'Ministry of Education' — and within it a Directorate General specifically responsible for primary education, which, as we have already pointed out, is backed up by a more or less extensive and hierarchized network of provincial, territorial and other directorates. Stress should be laid on the important role assigned in the conduct of primary education to one institution which in two countries (Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka) has the same name: 'Curriculum Development Centre'.

However, the Ministry of Education is not always the only central organism concerned with primary education. In Thailand, administration of the primary level is shared by three important organisms: the Prime Minister's Cabinet (in matters relating to finances, teaching personnel, etc.), the Ministry of the Interior (for infrastructure, territorial organization, allocation of resources) and the Ministry of Education, which alone is concerned with educational aspects. The provincial and local administrations of education, whose powers are not at all inconsiderable, come under the Ministry of the Interior. Still more complex is the case of Indonesia, a country where primary education is governed by three Ministries (Education and Culture, Internal Affairs and Religion), although a wide margin of decision making is also left to other central organisms (specifically, the Ministry of Finance and the 'National Council for Development Planning'). At lower territorial levels, there are also offices responsible to the various central organisms (as, for example, at the provincial level, the *Kantor Wilayah*, the *Kantor Dinas* and those of the Ministry of Religion). This organization of primary education can be seen in greater detail in Figure 1.

Latin America

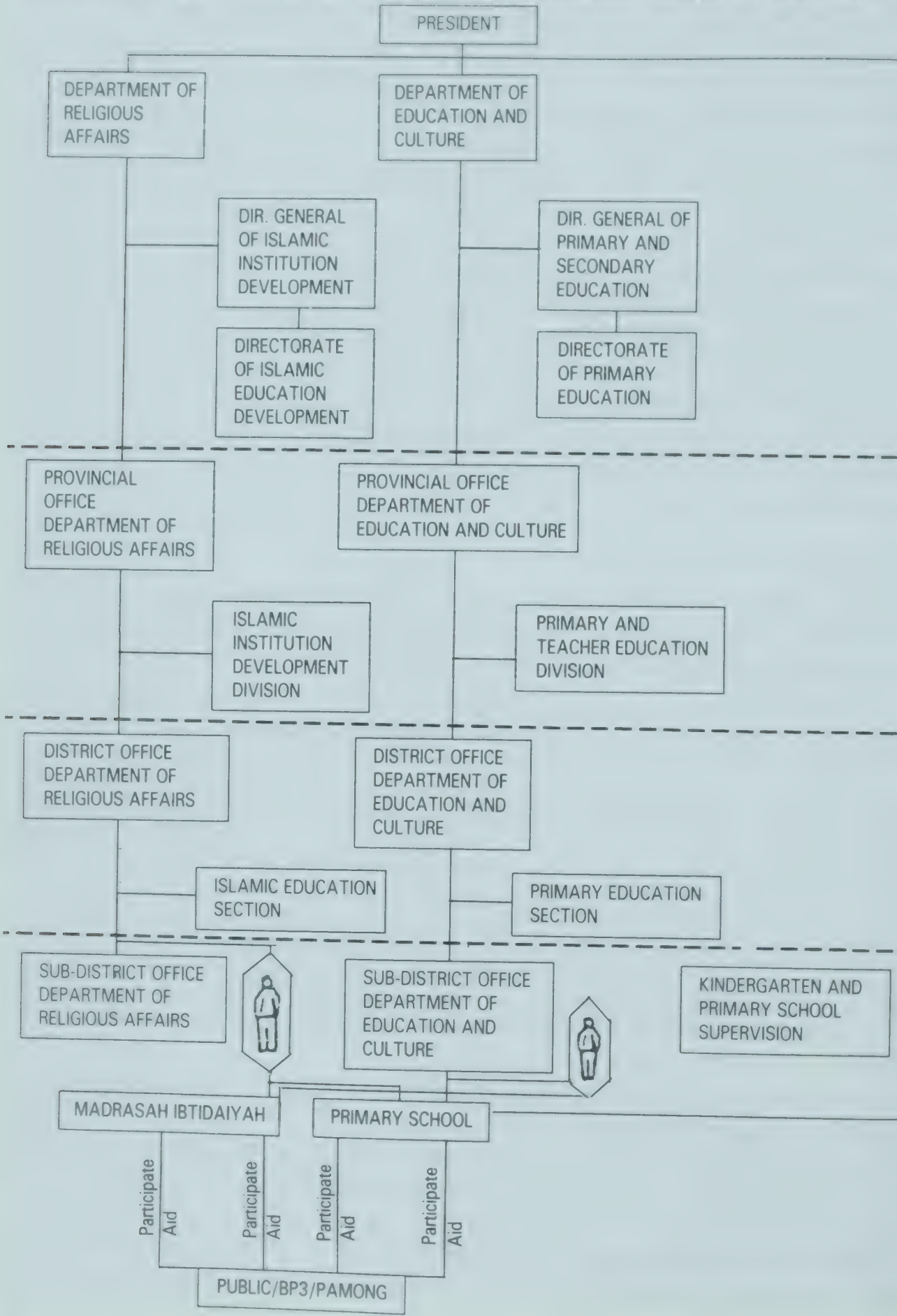
In the middle of the 1970s, an important publication of Unesco's Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean referred to educational administration in the following terms:

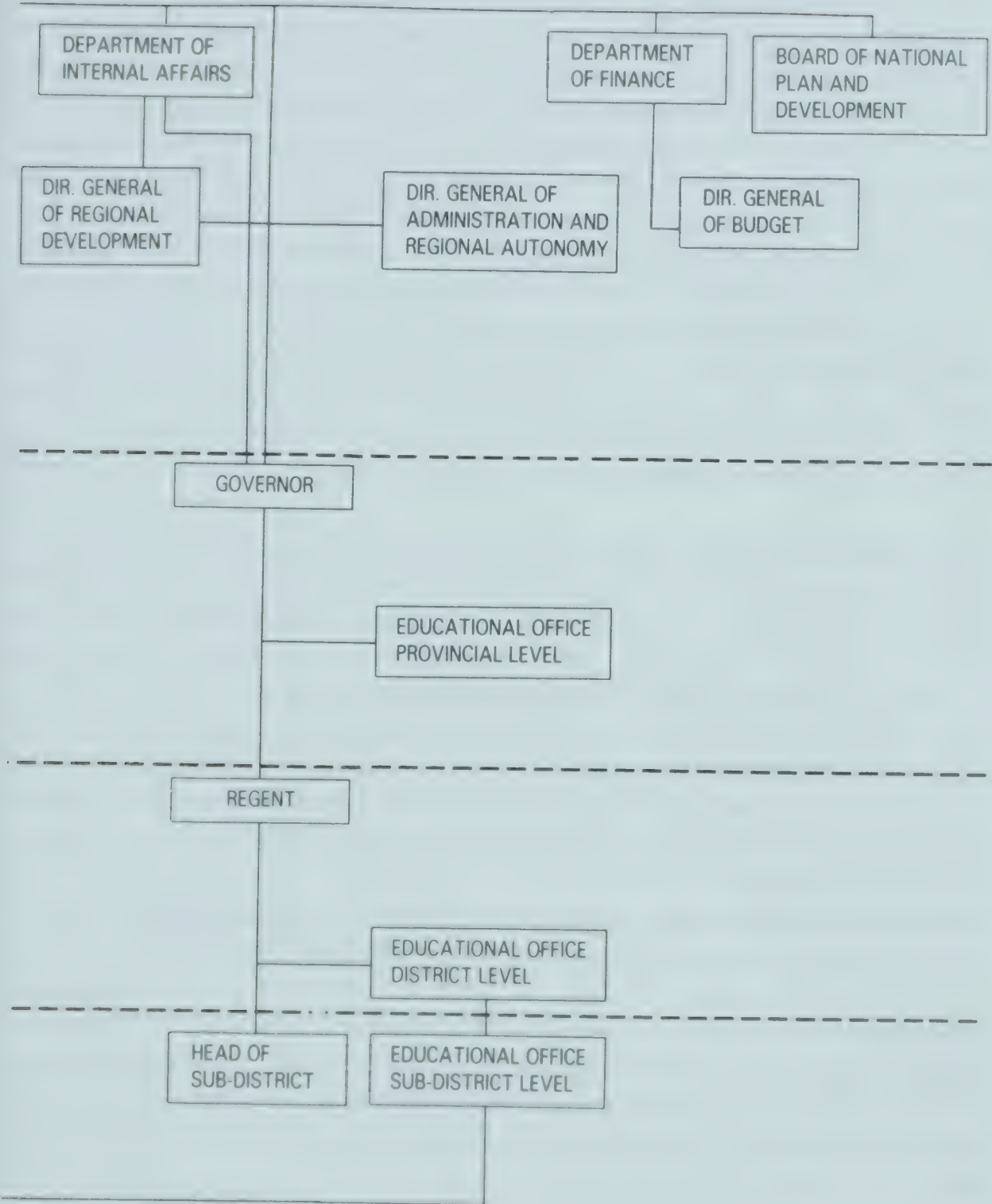
One of the main criticisms levelled at educational administration in the majority of Latin American countries concerns their excessive centralization compared to the size and diversification of the education system, which is composed of institutions scattered across national territories with distinct geographical, demographic, economic and social characteristics and, consequently, with various educational needs and problems. It is obvious that the concentration of decision making, programming and supervisory powers in ministries located in capital cities, and the concentration of authority in these ministries at the top of the hierarchical pyramid, is a source of difficulties. This excessive centralization prevents the identification of problems at the level where they originate and slows down measures adopted for their solution; rural areas seem to suffer most from the administrative centralization. But most serious of all is the fact that, among all the other tasks that demand their time, the staff and institutions at the national level must look after the business and details which should normally be looked after by the intermediate and local levels of the administrative pyramid[28].

In spite of the years which have gone by and the efforts made to achieve greater decentralization, the situation cannot be said to have evolved. The Latin American countries still adhere to a type of educational administration with a centralizing tendency which is perhaps especially striking at the level of primary education.

Let us begin by referring to those countries whose administrative and political structure is that of a federal State: Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Vene-

FIGURE 1. Organization of primary schools and Madrasah Ibtidiyah in Indonesia





zuela. In Argentina, efforts have been made on various occasions to give the provinces and the immense city of Buenos Aires a greater degree of participation in the administration of education. Legal provisions for the decentralization of the educational services were adopted in 1978, but the actual state of affairs has not changed much since then. On the contrary, in 1984 the President of the Republic stated that one of the basic objectives of his programme was to: 'Ensure the unity of the educational system promoting the homogeneity and correlation of the objectives and basic contents in all the jurisdictions but considering the historical, geographical, social and economical peculiarities of each region'[29]. In short, the administration of primary education in Argentina is still basically centralized and entrusted to what is called today the Ministry of Education and Justice and, within it, to the National Directorate of Primary Education. There are ministries of education, with their corresponding offices of primary education, in the provinces, but their actual participation in decision making is limited to non-essential aspects, almost always connected with the implementation of national policy in their own jurisdiction.

Mexico has also made attempts at decentralization, especially in recent years. In 1982, a 'General Co-ordination for Educational Decentralization' was even created within the Secretariat of Public Education, and the name of the former peripheral general delegations was changed to that of 'Units of Educational Services to be Decentralized'. In spite of all this, we can read in the report that today the Ministry of Public Education 'is the agency responsible for regulating, and disseminating education in our country'[30]. As far as primary education is concerned, this Secretariat contains a Sub-Secretariat for Elementary Education, which in turn contains, among others, a Directorate General of Primary Education.

In Venezuela, the central organism responsible for regulating and administering the entire educational apparatus is the Ministry of Education, attached to which is a Directorate of Basic Education. The twenty-three educational zones into which the country is divided are obliged to implement the policy and plans decided on by the Ministry of Education, and there is a section for basic education in all of them. Under these organisms there are the district and sectoral supervisors. To sum up, this is a pyramidal, hierarchized and substantially centralized organization.

On the basis of the assumptions made here, Brazil is perhaps the only Latin American country which might be considered decentralized, at least to a certain extent. This country will therefore be mentioned in the next section.

Since 1976, Colombia has been trying to establish a mixed system for administering primary education. On the one hand, it recognizes and encour-

rages the fact that 'the official basic education (primary and secondary) is a public service for which the nation is responsible'[31], and important tasks are entrusted to the Ministry of Education with respect to planning, direction and control, as well as to the preparation of curricula. But on the other hand, it is the secretariats of education of the departments, districts, commissariats or the special district of Bogotá which administer and supervise the regular operation of the primary schools and which appoint the teachers.

In Chile, there has also been an effort towards decentralization in recent years, especially beginning in 1980, when the establishments of basic and intermediate education were transferred to the municipalities. However, this is basically an effort towards deconcentration. It is the (central) Ministry of Education which really 'defines educational policies, gives official sanction to the general rules and plans for the sector and looks out for the correct administration and management of education'[32]. In reality, the existing regional secretariats are peripheral organisms of the Ministry proper, which act as deputies of the latter 'in accordance with the goals and objectives of the national education system'[33].

Something similar must be said about Peru, whose Ministry of Education, although fundamentally responsible for the conduct of the system, leaves wide powers to the Departmental and Zonal Directorates and to the Educational Supervisory Boards.

As far as the rest of the countries of the region are concerned, there is an organizational structure of a centralized kind in all of them, although in most of them it is possible to see a more or less pronounced tendency towards deconcentration. Few countries, however, use this term; one exception is Nicaragua, in whose report we read that 'Primary education, like all the rest of the education system, is centralized in the Ministry of Education and tends to become decentralized in those educational regions and zones which are beginning with deconcentration'[34].

Administration on a regionalized basis

As has already been shown, not all federations have regionalized their educational administration in the sense one would be led to expect. When this occurs, it is ordinarily among peoples long familiar with a centralized structure which they have subsequently replaced by another 'federal' one. The original forces continued to operate to a greater or lesser extent, also assisted by this centripetal tendency which, as suggested above, was inborn with the appearance of the modern State. In spite of having adopted federative structures in theory, this is what has prevented them from really putting them into practice. On the contrary, most of the nations which today preserve a truly regionalized educational administration built themselves up on the foundations of pre-

viously independent administrations. In other words, they possessed a history sufficiently rich in autonomous cultural institutions to have served as a brake against the violent attempts at centralization which they too at some time or another have also experienced. Moreover, the cultural institutions to which we refer have almost always been originally created with the support of municipalities or private bodies. Accordingly, their administrative structures which are today regionalized, frequently preserve some vitality from the local municipal administrations which it would be hard to find in countries more inclined to centralizing organizations.

The most obvious example of what we have just been saying is Switzerland whose educational administration has, since 1874, been based entirely on the cantons. And although it is the cantonal governments which, under article 2 of the Swiss Constitution, assume full responsibility for primary education, we must not forget the important obligations, with respect to both decision making and management, which are incumbent on the municipalities and local communities. For the purposes here in question, co-ordination between the twenty-six cantons and half-cantons of the Confederation is ensured by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Education, thanks to which it was possible in 1970 to sign an 'Agreement on educational co-ordination' which served to unite criteria concerning the age of admittance to primary schools, the length of compulsory school attendance, etc.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the direction of primary education is the responsibility of each of the *Länder* and, within them, of the respective Ministry of Cultural Affairs. A Permanent Conference of these ministers (*Kulturministerkonferenz*) is responsible for co-ordinating activities throughout the country.

The United Kingdom has, first of all, a separate educational administration for Scotland, Northern Ireland and England and Wales. In all of them there is a Department of Education which, in principle, is also responsible in some way for administering primary education. Nevertheless, what really characterizes the United Kingdom is not so much this territorial division as the fact that educational administration is entrusted to the local authorities. As can be read in the (British) Act of 1944, in England and Wales there is a 'national system, locally administered', which means that the weight of administration in primary education and at other levels falls on the local education authorities (LEAs) in all basic respects, from the preparation of curricula to the appointment of teachers.

Something similar is to be found in the United States of America. From the legal point of view, the states are responsible for organizing and administering primary education, a responsibility which they ordinarily exercise through their state education boards and more practically through the respective

superintendent or commissioner of education. Nevertheless, although general operating policies are established at this level, it is the districts which in fact direct, administer and control educational activities through their school boards and their own superintendents. A process known as 'consolidation' is still underway with a view to gradually reducing the number of districts, generally in order to combine the smallest ones. The 100,000 existing at the end of the Second World War have today been reduced to about 15,000.

In Canada, the provinces are constitutionally responsible for education. There is a ministry or department of education in them which is concerned with primary education. These ministries have regional offices, but it can be said that the local school boards are more important, since the provinces delegate very important functions to them, such as the appointment of teachers, the collection of special taxes or the allocation of subsidies supplied by the province. A Canadian Council of Ministers of Education has existed since 1967 as a national co-ordinating body.

As far as Latin America is concerned, only Brazil could be considered (and not without some qualification) as being among the countries with a regionalized administration of education. However, if there is any level to which this can apply it is certainly that of primary education or, according to the term used there, *ensino de 1º grau*. Although at the central level there is a Ministry of Education and Culture which 'sees to it that the educational laws are observed and that the decisions of the Federal Council of Education are enforced'[35], it is nevertheless the state secretariats of education which, in their respective states, actually administer all the fundamental details of primary education.

Australia is also a confederation which, in education as well as in other fields, grants much authority to its six states (and the Northern Territory). With regard to primary education, each of these governments directs its own system of primary and secondary education, in accordance with the legislation of the state or territory in question. The only exception is the Australian Capital Territory where the higher direction of the schools is directly in the hands of the Australian Government and, more specifically, its Ministry of Education. We might speak of a general tendency towards centralization within each state, although in recent years there have been movements towards deconcentration[36].

For reasons of national unity, India has had to entrust the co-ordination of primary education, including the preparation of general programmes, to its Federal Ministry of Education. In spite of this, the primary level is still basically administered in each of the twenty-one states and nine territories. In all of them there is a Department of Education which, in actual fact, centralizes practically all educational activities.

On the African continent, the only country which has a genuinely regionalized administration of primary education is Nigeria. Primary education there is constitutionally the responsibility of the local governments through the local school councils or local school boards. In addition, there is a Ministry of Education in each state which is responsible for issuing the basic guidelines. And at the federal level, the Federal Ministry is entrusted with certain coordinating functions.

Administration which is mixed or in a process of change

As a result of the heavy responsibility granted to the municipalities with respect to primary education, it is impossible, in the case of certain European countries, to speak of any really centralized administrative structure. This is the case, for example, in Denmark and the Netherlands, where all State schools at this level (aside from private schools) are in fact maintained and directed by the municipal authorities. Similarly, it would probably be incorrect to speak of centralization in a country like Ireland, in view of the considerable weight which non-State initiative has in the direction of the primary schools.

There has also been a constant tendency towards preserving the tradition of municipal autonomy in Belgium, although this was largely disregarded in the 1831 Constitution and subsequent legislation. This local tradition was later reinforced by the recognition of demands of a linguistic nature. The situation today cannot be considered to be completely stabilized, but there is a tendency towards increasing decentralization, both through the subordinate public authorities (provinces, municipalities) and through the two major linguistic communities (Flemish and French), each of which has its own Cultural Council and Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, some substantial organizational aspects (basic policies concerning curricula, salaries, subsidies, etc.) continue to be centralized. To sum up, Belgium finds itself in the middle of a process of open federalization, and the education system currently reflects both these tendencies and the consequent resistance to them.

Basic legislation and curricula are also centralized in Austria, although the primary schools are in fact dependent on the educational councils of the *Länder* (*Landeschulräte*). Although it is true that the central government issues provisions of a general character, it is also true that the authorities of the nine *Länder* interpret, apply and supplement them in what they consider the most appropriate way.

In southern Europe, the country which is experiencing the most substantial process of administrative change is Spain. Although it still preserves a basically centralized administrative structure today, education, at all levels, has already been transferred to various regional governments, such as those of Catalonia, the Basque country, Galicia, Andalusia and Valencia, while, in

principle, it is expected to be granted to other regions (or autonomous communities) as well. In the autonomous communities there is usually a board of education (and culture), and some of them have created a fairly large administrative apparatus of their own. Meanwhile, the central Ministry of Education and Science still retains important functions relating to the curriculum, high-level inspection, etc. The present situation is therefore rather indefinite as to the type of structure which will actually be adopted in the future.

Among the socialist countries, Yugoslavia also has an educational administration which, within the parameters we are using here, might be considered a mixed one. On the one hand, the Communist Party ensures that there is basic co-ordination and an identical educational policy in fundamental respects, including curriculum policy. The principal instrument in this task is the Inter-Republican and Inter-Provincial Commission for Educational Reform. But, on the other hand, the Constitution clearly states that education is the responsibility of each of the republics and autonomous provinces, which they exercise through various administrative and self-managing bodies. In short, as stated in the report:

It follows from everything that has been said here that primary education in Yugoslavia is a decentralized system in which basic responsibilities exist at the level of the Republics and Autonomous Provinces, but in which decision-making powers are decentralized to the appropriate administrative, self-managing and professional bodies at district and municipal levels and, in the last analysis, to schools themselves, giving them a degree of operational and self-managing autonomy.[37]

In Asia, Japan traditionally had a markedly centralized education system, but the process of decentralization undertaken after the Second World War has led to an administrative structure today which we might list as a mixed one. In everything relating to the curriculum for primary education (including the authorization of school textbooks), the fundamental rules are laid down by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Monbusho*). However, the local governments are the ones mainly responsible for the establishment, administration and maintenance of the schools, although they can count on advice from the prefectural governments. There is, however, a small proportion of primary schools (0.3 per cent) which depend directly on the national government.

New Zealand and Malaysia also have educational administrations which should be considered as mixed, inasmuch as, although it is the central government which defines basic policies (including that concerning curricula), the regional governments are the ones which actually administer primary education and which concern themselves with such important matters as, for example, the appointment of teachers.

As for the African continent, attention should be drawn to the effort towards decentralization being made in several States, as may be the case in Burundi.

whose educational cantons are attracting increasing support, or Benin, Gabon and the United Republic of Tanzania. However, aside from the case of Nigeria, which we have already considered, we should now mention that of Zimbabwe, which, through its regional offices and district councils, is achieving considerable degree of decentralization in the administration of its primary schools; in fact, the percentage of purely governmental schools is rather low (10 per cent of the total).

3. FINANCING PRIMARY EDUCATION

There are few questions so straightforward and at the same time so hard to answer as that of who actually pays for the primary education of children in each country. The easy answer is that it is paid for by almost all the citizens of the country in question (the 'almost' excluding some cases of outside aid). But what is difficult is to identify those citizens who really do pay for it; whether all of them pay and whether they pay in equal or unequal rates. If we went into this matter, it would amount to an investigation of the justice and reliability of the respective fiscal or taxation systems. This would require a highly complex investigation, which in any case would go beyond the purposes of this study. What we therefore propose to analyse here are no more than the channels through which finance flows in the various countries.

There is no doubt that the types of administrative structure are closely connected with the types of financing available in each case, since it is difficult to determine which of the two systems takes precedence in conditioning the other. Nevertheless, it would seem to be a principle that, especially in the long term, the type of financing adopted ends up by imposing its own peculiar quality on the administrative structure, unless the latter has other powerful resources which are able to reduce or mitigate the power of money.

Centralized financing

Corresponding to this general outline of educational administration, in which centralized administration obviously takes first place, we also find that with respect to educational financing in general — and primary education in particular — the predominant type is that of centralized financing, i.e. that which places full responsibility on the central government. With very few exceptions, this is the case with whole continents in specific geographic areas, such as Africa, the Arab States or Latin America. However, it is frequently very difficult to examine precisely the real financial support which is provided to the countries in these regions by other social forces and, in particular, by

private initiative. North America and Western Europe are undoubtedly the areas which can show a greater division of financial responsibility within each nation and among distinctly different socio-political structures, such as federal governments, the provinces, districts or municipalities. But even in these cases, behind what seems to be regionalized financing, there can exist — and in fact frequently does exist — financing of a centralized origin, since it is the central government which collects the funds and subsequently transfers them, according to more or less strict or participative criteria, to the administrative sub-structures which make up the nation.

We might say that the type of centralized financing is normally distinguished by the following characteristics:

1. The central government collects funds through its own system of taxation without the citizen knowing what part of his individual contribution is intended for education in general and, even less, for primary education.
2. When drawing up its general budget of expenditures, the central authority (legislative and executive) determines what amounts should be allocated to education and to the various sectors and levels of education.
3. The central government, acting on behalf of the nation or the State, finances the cost of all essential components of public primary education, i.e. teachers' salaries, construction of school buildings, additional services, etc. This financing can be handled *directly*, through the central organism responsible for the educational sector (normally the Ministry of Education), or *indirectly* by transferring State funds (through various ministries) to regionalized administrations or to the municipalities, so that they can pay for certain expenditures (maintenance and cleaning, building repairs, additional services, etc.).
4. If the education system itself also has a network of private primary schools, the central government controls the financing of that network in one way or another, by providing supplementary financing or assistance to private schools, by clearly establishing standard rules and exercising control over the financial sources of those schools (fees to be charged to the pupils, etc.). In those cases where financing or assistance is supplied to private schools, this may also be direct or indirect, as in the case of public schools, although it is generally direct.

Within this type of centralized financing, there are different degrees of centralization, depending on whether the central authorities make use, to a greater or lesser extent, of the indirect financing methods to which we have just referred. Today, there are few countries which practise absolute financial centralization, to the extent of financing *all* the costs of primary education and also doing so *directly* from their central organisms. With respect to public

primary education (i.e. apart from contributions from private education), this is the case in Greece, some Arab countries and a few other nations (including many with a socialist régime), although it should be explained that it is not always the State which defrays the actual sum-total of expenditures; material and occasionally other expenditures may be paid for by the pupils or the parents.

It is more common to find that at least a small proportion of expenditures (for example, for cleaning and maintenance, or for specific administrative or additional services) are paid for by the municipal authorities, which in turn receive funds from such ministries as those of the interior or of local administration. France, for example, which still has an essentially centralized system of financing, pays some of the maintenance costs for primary and other similar schools through the *communes* or parishes. Among other cases, something similar is to be found in some Arab countries, Botswana, China, Nepal, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela, etc. In Italy, the contribution of the regional, provincial and local governments amounts to 25 per cent of all expenditures budgeted for primary education.

The ministry of education, through its own organs, is generally the sole or predominant source of financing for the primary schools. In certain countries, however, economic support is sometimes supplied by other ministries, such as those of the interior, local administration (as we have already seen), agriculture, health, religious affairs and culture. Even in these cases, the ministry of education is usually responsible for what, without any exception, is the heaviest item of expenditure: the salaries of primary school-teachers. Rarely is this done otherwise. One of these rare exceptions is found in Indonesia, where primary school-teachers are paid by the Ministry of the Interior. It should be borne in mind that in this country, only 47 per cent of the regular expenditures for education are paid for through the Ministry of Education, the remaining 53 per cent (i.e. the greater part) being paid for through other departments.

In spite of having a system of financing which today we have to consider substantially centralized, there are quite a few countries which assign considerable responsibility in this respect to the municipalities. We might say that here we are standing just on the borderline between the systems of centralized financing and those of regionalized financing. In our opinion, the predominance of the first group is due to the fact that the municipalities generally act as intermediaries in the allocation of funds which have been collected and distributed by the central authority. Nevertheless, when acting as economic intermediaries in this way, the municipalities sometimes enjoy a certain degree of discretion, which undoubtedly serves to make them more responsible. One of the outstanding cases in this connection is the Netherlands, where the municipalities are not only responsible for maintaining the primary

schools but also for building and equipping them using funds provided by the Ministry of the Interior.

Although Belgium today has finally acquired a fairly decentralized administrative structure, it still retains a system of educational financing which is basically centralized. However, we should point out that, together with the traditional participation of the municipalities, there is a gradual tendency towards participation on the part of the provinces. As far as private education is concerned, it may be recalled that this is also largely financed by the central government in the Netherlands, as well as in Belgium.

We have already emphasized the importance of the municipal administration in the countries of northern Europe. This importance is also apparent in matters of financing. It might be said, therefore, that with regard to primary education, all of them share a financial responsibility which is divided between the municipalities and the ministry of education. In Denmark, for example, there is a system of payments and reimbursements between both authorities which is rather too complex to go into here. In Norway, as in Sweden, municipal intervention with regard to financing is equally important. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in all these countries, it is the central government, in the final analysis, which handles most of the financing of the schools.

Regionalized financing

As we have said before, the countries which might be considered to have a regionalized system of financing constitute a minority. Moreover, in quite a few cases there could be some discussion as to what point they too are not financially centralized, in view of the leading role which is occasionally played by the central administration. However, there are a number of distinctive features which entitle these countries to separate consideration. These features might be summed up as follows:

1. The collection of funds to be allocated to primary education is carried out in part by the authorities in the political and administrative zones into which the country is divided (states, provinces, prefectures, departments, districts, etc.).
2. The allocation of expenditures to primary education is also programmed and carried out, at least in part, within these political and administrative units.
3. Although there may be financing by the central or federal government, which even covers most of the expenditures, it is understood that the zonal authorities have authority for financing, which can be provided to the schools either *directly* (from the respective ministry or department) or

indirectly through the districts, municipalities, etc. In a few cases, it is the local authorities which assume the basic responsibility.

4. In countries where private primary schools are financed or assisted with public funds, the zonal authorities are usually responsible for such financing or assistance, frequently with the help of both the central and local authorities.

It does not seem necessary to explain that most of the countries we are now referring to are constitutionally 'federations'. However, not all federations enjoy regionalized educational financing. In Latin America, this is the case in Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela, where the central governments defray most of the expenditures for primary education (although, in fact, there is also a certain amount of participation by the provinces). This is likewise the case in Malaysia, whose constituent states do not participate in this matter (and not even the remote states of Sabah and Sarawak). Even in such a country as Nigeria, which is much more regionalized from the administrative point of view, the federal government is basically the responsible administrator in matters of educational financing. On the contrary, however, there are some countries which, in spite of not being federations, have a system for financing primary education which is markedly regionalized; Japan is the outstanding example.

In North America, the United States retains a system under which the bulk of expenditures is borne by each of the states and the local administrations. The federal contribution is usually less than 10 per cent, although there was a steady increase throughout the 1970s; moreover, it is usually not aimed at covering fixed costs but at financing special *programmes* of a social nature (schools in marginal areas, compensatory education, bilingual education, etc.) As for the proportion between state and local assistance, there are many and relatively large variations, although they waver between 50 and 40 per cent respectively. In Canada, the system of financing is similar, but the local contribution is less; the proportion contributed by the municipalities generally does not amount to 25 per cent, since maximum responsibility is assumed by the provinces, likewise with some assistance from the central government.

In Europe, the Federal Republic of Germany is a clear example of regionalized financing, since each of the *Länder* defrays the most important costs — the teachers' salaries — while the local authorities in turn cover the administrative and maintenance costs. In Switzerland, on the contrary, the financial burden is primarily borne by the local communities, which naturally cannot do so without considerable aid from their respective cantons and, to a much smaller extent, from the Confederation. In Austria and Finland, the municipalities are also theoretically responsible for financing, but in both countries the assistance of the central government is the decisive factor (in Finland,

between 60 and 95 per cent of all services), while in Austria the municipalities also receive some assistance from their respective provinces, apart from help from the central government. In view of the importance of the funds from this last source, we might ask ourselves whether there is really any regionalized financing in these last two cases. As for Spain, the transfer of primary education to the autonomous communities after the 1978 Constitution has not resulted, from the financial point of view, in any important change compared to the previous system, since it is still the central State which determines the amount of resources, and later transfers the necessary amounts to these autonomous territories. Consequently, the autonomous communities act essentially as intermediaries.

Australia likewise channels the financing of primary education through its state governments, for at this level the contribution of the federal government is very small. In continental Asia, the same is theoretically true in India, but there the participation of the Central Government is much larger. In that immense country, the channels through which financing flows are rather complex, as is also the case in Pakistan, which has a similar system. In Japan, as we stated before, the most important part in financing primary education, i.e. the teachers' salaries, is borne by the prefectures, while the remaining costs are defrayed by the municipalities. Both authorities (prefectures and municipalities) can each receive subsidies from the central government when really necessary.

Lastly, the only Latin American country which could be included among those with regionalized financing for primary education is Brazil. In terms of percentages, the states there pay 48 per cent of the cost, while the federal government contributes 28 per cent and the municipalities 7 per cent (most of the remainder coming from the large participation of private initiative in this sector).

Foreign aid

Many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been diverting an increasing amount of their resources to primary education, but in spite of this they are still far from achieving the quantitative and qualitative goals they have set themselves. In some cases, primary education consumes approximately one half of the funds allocated to education, which may still only mean that no more than a small percentage of real needs are actually satisfied. As still much remains to be done in spreading primary education, and still more in improving its quality, it is practically impossible to divert resources to other levels of the education system — which are also in need of funds and are also undoubtedly of the greatest importance for the economic development of

countries (vocational training, secondary and higher education, adult education, etc.).

All the basic items in the budget for primary education will have to be considerably improved. For example, in spite of the fact that most of the funds (more than 85 per cent as a general rule) are for the payment of teachers' salaries, these salaries are extremely low, even compared with those earned by teachers at other educational levels. It is fairly common for the salary of a secondary school-teacher to be twice as much as that of a primary school-teacher.

This being the case, it is perfectly clear that foreign aid has been and still is of vital importance for the development of primary education in this large group of countries. It is true that much of this foreign aid is not aimed directly at financing the education system or institutions, but, by generally improving the infrastructure or the quality of the services, it has an economic effect on the system of the first magnitude.

However, there is no doubt that international assistance has also remained sluggish in recent years when it has not actually fallen behind. Coombs has indicated the causes which have blocked the growth of aid programmes especially since the mid-1970s:

This unprecedented upsurge of international cooperation in education and in many allied fields, reached a high point in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Thereafter, the animating spirit of hope, enthusiasm, adventure, and friendship that had marked the earlier period seemed to wane. Of the many causes, the first was the deterioration of political relations between nations and blocs of countries, which, among other things, increasingly transformed international technical cooperation agencies (such as Unesco) into arenas for divisive political struggles. A second important cause was the sharp and prolonged worldwide recession, beginning in 1973, which constricted national budgets everywhere and prompted leading donor nations of Western Europe and North America to become increasingly preoccupied with deepening domestic problems[38].

Foreign aid normally reached the recipient countries by two ways: the international agencies and bilateral agreements. Among the former, we should begin by mentioning such financial bodies as the World Bank (IBRD and IDA) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as well as such specific supporting institutions as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Development Fund (EDF), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), etc. The technical and particularly educational aspects have been handled by United Nations specialized agencies, such as Unesco, UNICEF, FAO, ILO, or by others such as the Organization of American States (OAS), etc.

But in all the aid supplied, the quantitatively most important part is played by the bilateral agreements, which in 1975 accounted for 65 per cent of the total[39]. Then and now, the greater part of this assistance has come from

member countries of the OECD-DAC (Development Assistance Committee) although we should also note some very small participation in the primary education sector by OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), composed of the USSR and other Eastern European countries. As well as through OECD-DAC, North American aid has been supplied through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Many of the aid programmes have been aimed, directly or indirectly, at primary education. Directly, foreign funds have been used for building construction, school equipment, school transport and nutrition, the preparation of textbooks and other school material, scholarships and assistance for needy students, etc. Indirectly, primary education has been encouraged by many activities and programmes for initial and in-service teacher training, community development, literacy campaigns, educational research, etc.

One unusual kind of foreign aid is that supplied to Israel by the Jewish Agency, which was created thanks to contributions by Jewish communities all over the world. The importance of this aid is obvious when we consider the fact that more than half of the money spent on education by Israel comes from these foreign contributions, and that the educational level which receives the most economic assistance is still that of primary education (which accounts for nearly one-third of the whole).

Our basic intention in these pages has been and still is to provide an overall view of the situation as it has developed in recent years. For the time being, therefore, we shall not pass any judgements about the future of economic aid, just as we have refrained from doing so about other aspects. Nevertheless, we shall have to revert to these judgements at the proper time.

4. PLANNING AND EVALUATING PRIMARY EDUCATION

A description of present-day educational policies with respect to primary education would be incomplete if no attention were paid to the agencies in every country which are concerned with the planning and overall development of that level. As will be shown, both activities to a large extent involve or are closely connected with research work. It is therefore important to dwell somewhat on this latter point as well.

Planning organs and activities

To start with, we must draw attention to the polysemous character which the term 'planning' has been gradually taking on when applied to education in

general, and especially to a sector or level of it such as primary education. In the first place, 'educational planning' is generally understood as being the application to the educational sphere of a process aimed at the overall development of a whole society or human community, with priority given to goals or objectives of a predominantly economic and social character. When viewed in this light, the task of the organs engaged in planning would coincide with that which McKinnon assigns to the planning specialist: 'Fundamentally, the task of an educational planner must always be that of planning the rational and economic use of the nation's educational resources'[40]. However, in addition to this, which we might consider to be the primary and basic meaning of educational planning, there are other objectives which might complicate any attempt to give a separate identity to the organs or institutions concerned with planning in a national administration.

Through the differentiation between *quantitative* planning and *qualitative* planning, the subject has come to include such broad educational fields as those relating to curricula, including the most appropriate teaching methods or those relating to the administration of educational institutions themselves. Frequently, there is talk of 'curriculum planning' or 'institutional planning'[41]. Naturally, it is not our intention to question the need for planning organs to concern themselves with problems of a qualitative nature, as was rightly pointed out some years ago by Coombs[42]. On the contrary, it is clear that the neglect of these problems will result in converting the planner's task into a mere statistical exercise, which is almost always unproductive. However, what we are concerned with here, the granting of too much scope to the concept of educational planning, would force us to search through all the corners of administrative structures for more or less clear indications of any form of planning activity.

Obviously, this cannot be the purpose of the following paragraphs. The organs to which we are going to refer here are those which, within the ministerial departments, carry out advisory and/or decision-making tasks concerning the general planning of primary education *development* within the country in question. Normally, these organs are concerned with all levels of education and not primary education alone. Nevertheless, it is important to observe to what extent this level is properly taken into account by such services.

There is one quite striking preliminary observation: the 1980s do not share the enthusiasm for educational planning typical of the 1960s. We may recall that it was in that decade, and in the years immediately after, when the period of maximum expectations was encountered. The Inter-American Seminar on Overall Educational Planning (Washington, DC, 1958) was followed by many other conferences on the subject throughout the world (Paris, 1959; Karachi,

1960; Beirut, 1960; Bangkok, 1961; Addis Ababa, 1961; Tokyo, 1962; Paris, 1962; Berlin-Tegel, 1963; Abidjan, 1964; Tripoli, 1966; Nairobi, 1968; etc.). In most of them, Unesco played the basic role of organizer. In Europe and North America, the OECD's support was also considerable. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that almost all these international meetings dealt mainly with the planning of primary education, with a view to gradually making it universal in developing countries. The result of all these efforts was the creation of some international institutions concerned with educational planning. With Unesco's support, there was the Regional Centre for Educational Planning and Administration for the Arab Countries in Beirut (1961), the Asian Institute for Educational Planning and Administration in New Delhi (1962), an educational planning section (1962) which later (1968) became the Regional Institute for Educational Planning and Administration for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago de Chile, another section of the same type in Dakar (1963), which in 1965 became the Regional Group for Educational Planning and Administration. And, above all, the opening in Paris, in 1963, of the International Institute for Educational Planning[43]. Encouraged by this vast movement, which also had the very significant support of funds from the United Nations, the World Bank and other national and international agencies, the great majority of developing countries put under-way *educational development plans*, affecting primary education in particular, many of which are still being carried out.

There is no doubt, however, that today we are witnessing a considerable decline in activities of this kind. The basic cause of this decline in interest, among others, is the continued and universal slowing down in the growth of resources for education. As far as primary education is concerned, we must note the tremendous effort by many countries during the past few decades, an effort which has understandably led to a certain fatigue. To this should be added the fact that many countries have made indisputable progress in extending primary education, and even in making it universal, which would seem to entitle them to take a certain respite.

As a result of the attention devoted to educational planning everywhere during the last few decades, there are official organs in most countries engaged in this work. Although technically assigned to the internal services of the Ministry of Education, the planning of primary education is closely linked to ministries, departments or commissions of a more general nature. At times, there is a ministry entrusted with all basic planning activities serving as a co-ordinating agency. Saudi Arabia has such a Ministry for Planning. In Botswana, as well as in other countries, the work of planning is mainly carried out by the financial department, which has the name of Ministry of Finance and Planning. Other countries prefer to speak of 'Development'. This is the case in

Argentina or Nigeria, where there is a Federal Ministry of Economic Development. In Lesotho, the Ministry of Finance has a 'Central Office of Planning and Development' which co-ordinates activities. In France, and as was also the case for some years in Spain, there has been a General Commissariat for Development Planning of ministerial rank. In most countries with a communist regime, development plans (it should not be forgotten that the USSR was pioneer in this respect) are normally prepared by supra-ministerial or inter-ministerial commissions, in accordance with guidelines drawn up by their respective Communist Parties, normally at their regular congresses. Many countries also have planning boards or councils responsible for preparing joint plans and co-ordinating activities; this is the case, among many others, in Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal and Thailand.

Elsewhere, the great majority of ministries of education have a unit responsible for educational planning. The difference lies in the degree of importance granted to this organ and, what is more important for us, the greater or lesser degree of attention which they attach to the planning of primary education. Many of these organs are little more than offices for compiling statistical data; this is true in Lesotho, Malawi, the Syrian Arab Republic and, to a certain extent, in Austria and other European countries. In other nations, on the other hand, planning services enjoy a very high rank; in Sri Lanka, for example, one of the three big sections of the Ministry of Education is devoted specifically to planning. There are frequent cases where planning tasks have been located with those of educational research; this is the case, for example, in the Netherlands, Japan, Malaysia, etc.

Whether they have specialized offices or not, decision making in regard to planning is sometimes entrusted to intra-ministerial boards or committees under the chairmanship of the Minister; this is the case in Malaysia, Oman, the Syrian Arab Republic, etc. In Italy, there is a Technical Committee for Educational Planning within the Ministry of Public Education. But this type of board or committee is not always exclusively subordinate to a ministry; this was the case with the 'Commission for Planning and Progress in Educational Research', created in 1970 in the Federal Republic of Germany.

We should add to all this that, in a sizeable group of countries, the work of planning, at least with respect to decision-making in matters of fundamental importance, is carried out by boards, commissions and organs of a more general kind. In Sweden, the body mainly concerned with this matter (as well as with many others) is the National Education Board. In Turkey, there is also a so-called 'Board of Education' within the Ministry of Education which is frequently — but not exclusively — concerned with planning matters (however the body with maximum responsibility in this matter is the Organization of State Planning, directly responsible to the Prime Minister). In Israel, plan-

ning tasks are usually carried out by the Educational Secretariat within the Ministry.

Lastly, there is also a considerable number of countries which do not have any planning bodies or committees of a permanent nature, but carry out the appropriate tasks through *ad hoc* committees set up by specialized inspectors, officials, etc.; one of these countries is Belgium.

There are many different planning problems at the primary level which concern countries today, depending on the progress made in education to date. Most of the African countries, as well as many in Asia and Latin America, are still paying considerable attention in their *development plans* (supposing that they have not already been interrupted) to problems of a quantitative nature, i.e. introducing universal primary education and to preventing any too conspicuous school drop-outs. Other countries are making a special effort to prevent the school enrolment of girls from being manifestly lower than that of boys (as is the case in India).

But there is no doubt that, for some years now, planners have been increasingly aware of problems of a qualitative nature. The widespread financial crisis, with its inevitable corollary of cutting back on the considerable resources devoted to primary education, is forcing them to seek alternatives to the traditional, expansive plan. In Africa, for example, interesting research is being carried out aimed at solving the problem of the excessive number of pupils per class — in primary education — not by the easy method of creating new units but by making the maximum use of the resources available today[44]. In other developing countries, increased attention is being paid to various programmes for supporting primary education by distance education techniques, both as direct assistance to the work of teaching in the schools and, indirectly, for in-service teacher training.

In the developed countries, the widespread decline in the birthrate has already led to a considerable decrease in the number of pupils in primary education. Planning therefore seems to be directed at making use of surplus resources (both material and human) to improve the quality of services. Nevertheless, the policy of concentrating educational resources in specific places, largely encouraged by school transport facilities, is being subjected to considerable criticism, both because of the great expense involved and because it sometimes tends to uproot children from their native community. In Switzerland, for example, as pointed out by Pierre Furter[45], there are many protests against the disappearance of schools in small mountain villages.

The preceding references are no more than examples of the new kind of problems confronting primary education planners in recent years. For some years now, as pointed out by Coombs[46], we have been witnessing a frag-

mentation of planning interest 'from the purely national aggregate level close to local realities'. Consequently, we should not be surprised if planning offices at the ministerial level seem to be suffering from a certain degree of stagnation almost everywhere.

Evaluation activities

The conviction that all economic resources invested in education were more than justified was, as we have seen, a widespread belief in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. Of course, protests were not lacking from critics who stressed the need for exercising more careful control over the increasingly large resources being squandered on the education system. The idea of requiring educational institutions to show a specific and verifiable return slowly gained ground during the years of enthusiasm for investment, and in the United States, for example, the so-called 'accountability' movement made itself known at the beginning of the 1970s[47]. Nevertheless, it was only in the 1980s that the paramount necessity to evaluate the practical efficiency of educational institutions and services succeeded in gaining ground, especially when it became impossible to continue allocating such resources to them indefinitely. The same is true of the idea of control, which was always rejected by educators and disregarded by the authorities, but which is again slowly becoming a part of reform plans.

All education systems, in fact, have bodies to evaluate their operations and remedy any defects. This is the role traditionally assigned to the inspection services, which are to be found in one form or another practically everywhere. For this task, most countries have selected persons possessing the two-fold qualification of direct experience in education and some specific preparation for the task. It has been frequently emphasized that inspectors are not merely expected to criticize the teachers' professional conduct but rather to help and guide them in such a way that their work would be more satisfactory and efficient. In the United Kingdom, for example, 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate' which in principle was created to check on the proper use of public funds allocated to educational bodies, has been gradually and increasingly taking on the work of advising local authorities and the teachers themselves, as well as conducting advanced teacher training. Evaluating the system usually takes the practical form of carrying out specific studies on various aspects of the situation and by issuing appropriate reports.

In highly centralized and hierarchical systems, such as that of France, the inspectors have generally acted as a control to ensure the correct observance of provisions issued from the top. However, they too have gradually been devoting more time to such activities as technical advice, curricula, study programmes, etc.

In many countries, the work of evaluation has gradually become more closely connected with that of research, so that reform projects always originate from a clear knowledge of the facts. Such institutions as, for example, the Centre of Educational Experimentation and Development, set up in Austria in 1970, or the Korean Educational Development Institute, founded in the Republic of Korea in 1972, are making noteworthy efforts to evaluate their own systems, the efficiency of their schools, the effectiveness of their present curricula, etc. These are merely two examples among many others which might be mentioned. These research institutions will be mentioned again further on.

For the moment, let us concentrate on the work of inspection. Most of the European countries with a centralized administration naturally have a centralized inspectorate, normally at the highest level and usually engaged in work of general supervision, but there are also inspectors on a lower level who are concerned with the everyday facts of school life. France, for example, has three distinct levels of inspection: the general inspectorate within the State Ministry, which 'carries out a permanent task of evaluation and encouragement, of information and advice, as well as any special assignments with which it may be entrusted'[48], and which in turn is divided into three bodies (the Inspectorate General of National Education, which is the one really responsible for evaluating the education system as a whole; the Inspectorate General of Administration and the Inspectorate General of Libraries). At the regional level (i.e. that represented by the twenty-seven *académies* into which the territory is divided), there are regional educational inspectors who carry out tasks at the direction of the respective *recteur* to whom they are responsible. In the *départements*, and under the mandate of the *inspecteur d'académie* (who is the director of the departmental educational services) there are the departmental inspectors of national education, who are concerned with visiting schools and inspecting and advising primary and secondary school-teachers. (This level also includes inspectors of technical training, information and guidance.)

If we have paid particular attention to the case of France, it is because we consider it fairly representative of many other — and not only European — countries. In Greece, for example, there are also three levels of inspection, and the ten educational districts into which the country is divided have their own district inspectors, although in this case they are directly responsible to the Office of the Inspector General of Primary Education (the level with which we are concerned here) in Athens. In Italy, the inspectors responsible for evaluating primary education are directly linked to the Directorate General of Primary Education within the ministry (although they are specialized inspectors in some sectors which also have some influence on this level, such as for artistic, athletic and other specific kinds of education). In Turkey, inspectors

are grouped in the Inspection Board within the ministry. The Netherlands also has an inspectorate at the central level which acts as a co-ordinating body, although there are sixty-nine inspectors and one chief inspector who concentrate themselves with primary education in each of the four existing districts of the country.

In the case of countries with a regional administration, it is most common to find that the evaluation of primary education, and consequently the inspection services, are also regionalized to a greater or lesser extent. In the Federal Republic of Germany, each *Land* has its own inspection service, and the federal ministry has no responsibility whatever in this field. In Switzerland the board of education in each canton acts to a large extent as a supervisory organ, although inspection actually depends on the local boards. The United Kingdom also has a supervisory system which is essentially dependent on the local authorities; the central inspectorate for England and Wales (the famous 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate') primarily carries out tasks of general information, as has been stated above. Likewise in the Scandinavian countries, in spite of the predominant centralization of their administrative structures, inspection has been traditionally linked to the local authorities. Outside Europe Canada also carries out this work through local inspectors, although there is a chief inspector in each province.

Among the Arab countries, there is generally a centralized conception of the services for evaluating and inspecting the system. This does not mean that everything is concentrated in the central ministry. In Jordan, for example, each of the eighteen existing directorates has its own inspectors. The same is true in the twenty-three educational zones of Saudi Arabia, and in the eight educational areas of Oman. It should be recalled that in some of these countries (the most obvious case is perhaps that of the United Arab Emirates) there is a separate and distinct inspectorate for girls' primary schools and another for boys' primary schools.

In Asia, the same is true in Iran and Pakistan, where there are two clearly separate inspection networks for boys' schools and girls' schools. Moreover, in Asia and Oceania there are also centralized and hierarchical inspectorates (Bangladesh, Nepal, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, etc.). We might point out some original features, for example; in Indonesia, although pedagogical supervision falls under the Ministry of Education, supervision of the schools is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior (in the districts there is a body of inspectors or *penilik*). In Nepal, within the Ministry of Education, there is an important Evaluation Division, whose three sections are concerned with inspection, research and accounting respectively. Also of interest is the case of Japan, where there are three inspection networks: one of national scope, is limited to supervising the local school boards, but not the

schools themselves; the prefectural inspectors carry out tasks of advanced teacher training and counselling; lastly, there are the local inspectors who supervise schools directly.

In both Latin America and Africa, there is a predominantly hierarchical conception which means that the work of the inspectors at the primary level (frequently located in provinces, districts, etc.) is based on rules of procedure originating in and directed from the central authorities. Within the Ministry of Education in Colombia, for example, there is a Directorate General of Administration and Inspection, with a Primary Education Division having its own inspectors; nevertheless, there are also district supervisors. In each of the eight existing regions in Senegal, there is an Inspector-General of Primary Education for this purpose, who is more directly responsible for the inspectors of the departments and sub-prefectures.

Research institutions

Although many research institutions have been created more with a view to the country's educational development than to diagnosing the situation or evaluating the efficiency of the system, the subjects of concern to these institutions give a more or less precise image, directly or indirectly, of the successes achieved and the deficiencies which have not been overcome. They constitute, at least potentially, a tool for evaluating the education system itself which should not be underrated. We should therefore refer to them at this point, if only very briefly, since primary education is not usually their sole or priority objective.

There are still a considerable number of countries whose governments have made no provision for the creation of educational research institutions. But there are many more which have hastened to create them, especially in the last two decades, because they were convinced of the need. They have usually adopted one of three fundamental ways for setting up educational research within their administrative structures.

One of them has been to assign some ministerial division or section to encourage or even to carry out research; among other organs, this is the case with the National Directorate of Research and Advanced Training created in the Ministry of Education of Argentina, the Division of Curricula, Research and Development in China, the Directorate of Planning and Research in Jordan, the Research and Development Unit in Indonesia, the Planning and Research Office in Japan, the Evaluation Division (with its research section) in Nepal, etc.

The second customary solution is that of boards or commissions which are wholly or partly assigned to research within the ministries or in association with them. In Sweden, the National Education Board is in charge of important tasks of this kind, in a way similar — at least in theory — to the Turkish

Education Board, the Turkish National Council of Educational Research, the Sudanese National Research Council (which is concerned with research in all fields, while paying little attention, it would seem, to the educational field proper), etc.

But the solution most frequently adopted has been to create specific research institutes or centres, often possessing a certain functional autonomy. France has the National Institute of Pedagogical Research; the Netherlands the Research Institute (created in 1966); Chile, the Centre of Advanced Training and Pedagogical Research; Cuba, the Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences; Peru, the National Institute for Educational Development and Research; Egypt, the National Centre for Educational Research, etc. Some countries have more than one institution of this type; this is true of most of those in Eastern Europe, since there is generally one of them for each field of interest — dependent on the respective Academy of Sciences. The same is true in some federal States, as in Australia, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States. In 1978, China reopened the Centre of Scientific Research on Education, which had been closed during the Cultural Revolution.

Finally, it is neither possible nor necessary at this point to consider the numerous institutions assigned by governments to educational research (even without taking account of the many others which are dependent on universities, private bodies, etc.). They all pay some attention to primary education.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

For the sake of brevity, when references and quotations are drawn from the documentation of the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education, the following conventions have been used: Q1 = reply to questionnaire no. 1; NR = national report. See Introduction for a complete explanation. Full bibliographic references to these documents were included in King, E. *International yearbook of education*, vol. XXXVII. Paris, Unesco, 1986. p. 355-366.

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CHAPTER II

Organization of primary education

1. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

By its very nature, primary education constitutes the foundation of the entire formal structure of an education system. In other words, it makes possible the organization of the institutional apparatus as a whole and most strongly characterizes the specific physiognomy of the system. The fact that quite a few countries have already achieved tremendous progress in primary education does not permit either them or other countries to forget its central and far-reaching importance as a basic pillar of all educational institutions.

In the following pages we are going to concern ourselves with the main structural features of the primary level itself, leaving aside its co-ordination with other levels until later. And since in the great majority of countries this period coincides with that of compulsory education, we will necessarily have to refer to the relations between one and the other, in spite of having already dealt with this subject in part in Chapter I. We do not propose to undertake any detailed analyses but simply to give an overall, comprehensive picture of these relations. The text will then deal with the period of primary education itself and compare the length of time allotted to it in different countries. As we shall see, although there is no lack of isomorphisms, not all of them are the result of the same basic perceptions, just as not all the differences involve fundamental divergences. We shall devote the last part of this first section to a brief review of the internal structure of the primary level, taking into consideration a few significant cases.

Compulsory education and primary education

Table 2, based on the eighty-five countries which answered the ICE questionnaire on primary education, gives us an overall picture of situations where the periods of time allotted to compulsory education and primary education do or do not coincide. This table will provide a better understanding of the comments made later on.

TABLE 2. Coincidence between compulsory education and primary education

	Countries without compulsory education	Countries with compulsory education		Total
		Coincides with primary education	Does not coincide	
Latin America	—	11	3	14
Asia and Oceania	5	7	2	14
Arab States	2	2	4	8
Western Europe and North America	—	5	13	18
Eastern Europe	—	1	8	9
Africa	11	6	5	22
Total	18	32	35	85

The majority of countries recognize today that primary education should be compulsory (67 out of 85). Among them, there are a few more (35 compared to 32) which allot a longer time to compulsory education than that assigned to the first level of education. It is clear that this situation differs considerably from what used to be the norm in the middle of this century.

On the other hand, we should not leap to the conclusion that because primary education is not compulsory, it is not universal either. On the contrary, some countries have achieved a significantly greater degree of universality than those achieved by others where compulsory education is established by law! This is the case, for example, in the Arab States referred to (Qatar and Tunisia). Qatar's report explicitly states that it would be unnecessary to make the primary level compulsory by law, since it has been extended *de facto* to the entire population of the corresponding age group. Something similar could be said of Tunisia, with the possible exception of a few rural areas where there are some shortcomings in school attendance, especially on the part of girls: this has gone so far that the tendency there is not to make six years of primary education universal — a goal which can be considered as already attained — but rather basic education lasting nine years.

The same is true in some African nations. In Kenya, for example, 93 per cent of the population between the ages of 6 and 15 is actually attending school, although seven years of primary education are not required by law. Zimbabwe has a rate of school attendance between the ages of 7 and 13 of more than 90 per cent. Mauritius, Nigeria and the Central African Republic, countries which have also not legalized compulsory education, are likewise close to having universal school attendance. Lower, but still considerable, percentages of

attendance are to be found in countries like Botswana, where 83.3 per cent of children of the corresponding age receive seven years of primary education. The percentages are considerably lower in such countries as Cameroon, Malawi, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, which have not yet decreed any period of compulsory education.

As for the five countries of Asia and Oceania which come under this heading, only Malaysia has attained a high level of enrolment. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, we find that the government is showing some reluctance towards accepting the very idea of compulsory education, although the percentage of primary school attendance does not exceed 80 per cent. The remaining three countries (Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan) still have serious problems with regard to school attendance in spite of the considerable efforts they have made. (Nepal, for example, has achieved a school attendance rate of 87 per cent for the first three years of primary education.)

Nor does the fact of having made education compulsory by law mean that progress has been made in generalizing primary education. There are countries like Congo, Gabon and Guinea which rank high with regard to compulsory education as far as its duration is concerned, but which, on the other hand, are still suffering from high rates of absenteeism, even in the first grades.

In Asia, although India has achieved a relatively acceptable percentage in the first grades of compulsory education, for the population between ages 11 and 14 it reports a school attendance rate of only 50 per cent. In Latin America, the majority of countries cannot show a rate of primary school attendance of more than 90 per cent, although in many of them compulsory education was decreed many years ago. Algeria has established nine years of compulsory education (the first six of which correspond to the primary level), but it has an enrolment rate of barely 80 per cent. It is unnecessary to add further examples.

Another aspect which should be mentioned is the age bracket covered both by primary education and compulsory school enrolment, especially in those cases where the two periods coincide. Although normally there is a definite number of years prescribed for these periods, and there is even an official or standard age for beginning both of them, it happens fairly frequently that children do not enter school until age 8 and older which, together with possible grade repetitions, causes both compulsory and primary education to be completed at a much later time than that provided by law, even for numbers of pupils that should by no means be considered small. Obviously, this phenomenon occurs above all in developing countries. We shall revert to this detail in Chapter V.

In the European countries, both Western and Eastern, and in North America, compulsory education extends over a longer period of time — and sometimes considerably so — than that of primary education proper. With the exception

of Portugal and Cyprus, where both compulsory education and primary education last for six years, the other countries where the two periods coincide (San Marino, Turkey and Sweden) grant a considerable extension to the primary level. We might even question the inclusion here of some of them, for example Sweden. Is it right to claim that the nine years of compulsory comprehensive school are years of primary education? Would it not be more appropriate to list only the two lower levels of this institution as constituting the primary level? As for the countries of Eastern Europe, the only one where the primary and compulsory periods coincide is Yugoslavia.

Duration of primary education

Nevertheless, let us discuss in greater detail the aspect of the length of time allotted to primary education within the institutional structure of the different systems. As in the preceding case, we shall also start from a comprehensive review (Table 3).

TABLE 3. Number of countries according to the length of primary education

	Years							Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Africa	—	—	2	10	7	3	—	22
Latin America	—	—	1	10	1	2	—	14
Asia and Oceania	—	—	6	7	1	2	—	16
Arab States	—	—	1	7	—	—	—	8
Western Europe and North America	—	2	3	8	2	4	1	20
Eastern Europe	3	—	—	1	—	4	1	9
Total	3	2	13	43	11	15	2	89

The first point of interest is the total number of countries under consideration, which is still the same eighty-five that answered the IBE Questionnaire. However, as can be seen, the total number apparently includes an additional four, bringing it up to eighty-nine. The reason for this is as follows: the United Kingdom and the United States have been included under two different headings: the United Kingdom because the duration of the level varies between England and Wales (six years) and Scotland (seven years); while the United States has two very extensive systems of elementary or primary education of six and eight years respectively. The same is true of China, where

primary education can last five or six years, depending on the area, and of Indonesia, where primary education can last seven years in the Islamic schools, although the official primary education is for a period of six years. Accordingly, the total number of entries has been increased.

Although it is sufficiently clear from the table that almost half of the countries studied provide primary education for six years, this figure varies considerably both upwards and downwards. Naturally, this cannot help but have important implications with respect to the very concept of primary education. First, let us concentrate on the education systems which consider this level as extending over a short period of time.

Under the heading of those countries requiring fewer years of primary education there are three which in fact share the same idea about its administrative and institutional structure (Byelorussian SSR, Ukrainian SSR and the USSR). For some time now, the USSR has been emphasizing that the basic and most suitable educational institution in the system was the secondary or middle level, which was compulsory for all Soviet children. In this respect, primary education was above all looked upon as a kind of preparation for dealing, as soon as possible, with the general and polytechnical subjects of the subsequent and more important stage. Hence its brief duration and relative loss of favour within the Soviet institutional structure. All in all, the *načalnaya škola* (elementary or primary school lasting three years, sometimes four) as a separate institution is still a sufficiently widespread reality throughout the country so that primary education retains its unique character.

Another education system which has also preserved a short-term primary level is that of the Federal Republic of Germany. This and the Austrian system are the only two which today allot a period of four years to this level. It should be pointed out, however, that in some parts of the Federal Republic of Germany the duration of this level is six years, inasmuch as the primary school (*Grundschule*) is also responsible for preparing the next higher stage (*Orientierungsstufe*), lasting for two years.

There are more countries which allot five years to this level. France has been, and still is, one of the most typical. In Europe, the Netherlands has also traditionally adhered to this structure, although today, after the reform introduced in August 1985, primary education might be considered to include the preceding period (we shall allude to this point a little later on). The third European country included in this group is Spain, which also calls for some explanation, since, in its report, it maintains that primary education might be conceived of in two ways, either as the entire period of basic general education, lasting eight years, or as the period corresponding to its first stage of five years: in view of its special characteristics, the latter criterion seemed the most plausible. In Latin America, the case of Colombia is very similar to that of

Spain, although basic education there (the first five years of which would constitute the primary level) lasts for nine years in all. Among the African education systems, this length of time is only preserved in Morocco, where there is still considerable French influence. As far as Africa is concerned, the two countries referred to in Table 3 are Madagascar and Mozambique, although in the latter case it should be explained that this corresponds to the old system (which is still in existence), since the new system of national education envisages the introduction of primary or elementary education lasting for seven years. There are somewhat more countries in Asia which envisage the same period. We have already referred to China, which is applying it only in part. The others are Bangladesh, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Viet Nam.

Before referring to the systems which constitute the majority, let us focus our attention on those countries which envisage primary education as lasting for seven years or more. There are twenty-eight of them — a considerable number. And although in these systems there is a majority which maintain a period of eight years, there are not a few which have adopted a period of seven years. Outstanding among them are those on the African continent: Botswana, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, which must be added Cameroon, since in English-speaking areas primary education also lasts for seven years there. Here, we should perhaps also include the new national system of education of Mozambique, which, as we have said above, has introduced the same period. In Kenya, on the contrary, they have been thinking of introducing eight years of primary education, beginning in 1985. In Latin America, this viewpoint has been adopted only by Argentina. Indonesia, as we have already said, has accepted this idea only in the Islamic schools, since officially established primary education lasts for six years. Lastly, this conception is only rarely applied in Europe. The countries which do so are Scotland and Denmark: the latter considers that primary education covers the first seven years of its *Folkeskole*, a nine-year integrated State school.

The period of eight years of primary education has gained some acceptance in the last few decades, especially in Europe. In North America, the United States established it at an early date throughout the country, where it is still preserved, although now only in remnants. In Europe, it is most frequently encountered in the Eastern countries (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia), while elsewhere it is applied in Ireland, San Marino and Turkey, if we leave aside — as explained above — the case of Spain. In Africa, it is current in Malawi, Rwanda and Seychelles, but we might well ask whether the entire period is really devoted to primary education. In Malawi, for example, the national examination is held at the end of the fifth year; therefore are we not

justified in thinking that this examination serves as the culmination of five years of primary education proper?

The two cases of Asia and Oceania also call for some reservations. India, in spite of recognizing this eight-year period as elementary education, frequently accepts the first five years of it as the primary level proper, since those five years possess certain common characteristics which have been widely encouraged in order to promote their generalization. For a different reason, we must refer to the case of New Zealand. In that country, although primary education is acknowledged to have an official length of eight years, there is now a trend towards a shorter period (six years), inasmuch as more than 70 per cent of pupils complete their seventh and eighth years in middle-level or secondary schools. Lastly, there are also two countries in Latin America which have organized a system of primary education lasting eight years: Brazil and Chile, the former under the name of first grade education and the latter under that of basic general education. The factual references made in the reports of both countries show that this is not only a new terminology but also a new reality differing from the old primary education, but there is no question, in fact, that it really constitutes primary education.

Now let us take up those education systems which make up the majority, i.e. those which have adopted a period of six years for primary education. Eleven of them are in Africa: Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritius, Nigeria, Central African Republic and Senegal. As exceptions, we should point out that in Cameroon only the French-speaking part prescribes this period, while the Central African Republic has provided for a reduction by adopting five years of primary education as the first phase of nine years of basic education. In this respect, the case of Gabon is somewhat complex. If we accept its Law 16/66, still in force, it would seem that primary education has been extended considerably farther, to include two pre-school years and at least as many others in the lower secondary level; but here we have chosen to accept what appears to be the most reasonable interpretation and the one which, moreover, corresponds to its educational reality.

This period of primary education has also been adopted by many Latin American and Caribbean countries, including the Bahamas, Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

With respect to Asia and Oceania, we have already explained that this period is the one most commonly applied in China and Indonesia. It also applies to Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It should be noted, however, that in Sri Lanka there is a tendency to establish eight years of elementary education.

Primary education also lasts for six years in most of the Arab States, such as Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia. In

some of them, this period is only the first part of a longer integrated education, such as Algeria's basic school or Egypt's basic education, both of which last nine years. It is interesting to note that in Tunisia, although the period initially assigned was six years, it can be extended to eight, so that those who did not succeed in obtaining their pre-secondary or vocational certificates can do so during the subsequent two years.

Among the Eastern European countries, only the German Democratic Republic has adopted a structure that would entitle us to consider the first two cycles of its general polytechnical education as primary education; these two periods last for six years. In Western Europe and North America, on the contrary, the period now under consideration has received ample support and is applied in Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, the United Kingdom (except in Scotland) and the United States of America.

To sum up, the six-year period not only appears to be most common in all the countries we have taken as a point of reference, but also in each of the regions referred to, with the exception of Eastern Europe.

Internal structure

Up to now, we have been concerned with primary education within the institutional structure of the entire education system. Let us now give a little thought to the internal structure of the level itself.

Except in those few cases where the period of primary education is short, it is customary for this level to be divided into two or more periods or cycles. Even in the Federal Republic of Germany, in spite of the short period of primary education, a certain differentiation is frequently applied between the first two grades and the last two, consisting primarily in the fact that, while the practice of having a single teacher per class is applied universally in the first period, it is not possible in the second period for several teachers to participate in the teaching process, so as to pave the way for what will be normal practice later on. Another feature which is quite frequent, although not found in all institutions, is the introduction of a modern language (generally English) in this second period, i.e. after grade 3.

In any case, the criterion of whether there is a single teacher or teaching is shared is not always used as a criterion for internal differentiation; however, in many cases it is a characteristic of the demarcation line between primary and secondary education. This is especially true in many developing countries where it would be impossible to act otherwise owing to the lack of qualified teachers.

Although at this point it does not seem either possible or desirable to enter into too many details about the different periods of time allotted to primary education, we should nevertheless give a few representative examples.

To begin with, let us mention a few European practices. In France, primary education is divided into three cycles, of which the first (called 'preparatory') lasts for only one year, while the two following cycles (called 'elementary' and 'intermediate' respectively) each lasts for two years. This seems to suggest a preference for dividing the period into short cycles. In Spain, the General Education Law of 1970 provided that primary education should consist of a long stage of five years, as the first of the two stages comprising the basic general education established at that time. At the beginning of the 1980s, it was decided to divide this stage into two cycles, lasting two and three years and called respectively 'initial' and 'intermediate', but this division was afterwards abandoned and a new ruling is awaited. In Portugal, basic education, which really corresponds to primary education as we have seen above, is also divided into two cycles, the first of which is fairly long and is called 'primary education' (which is somewhat confusing from the point of view of this discussion) and a second shorter cycle (two years) of 'preparatory education'. A similar division is practised in Malta, likewise with two cycles of four and two years respectively (with the variation of beginning one year earlier). On the other hand, the Swedish integrated school has three cycles called 'lower', 'intermediate' and 'higher', each of them lasting for the same length of time. In England and Wales, the most usual division is between the first two grades (infant classes) and the four following ones (junior classes), although there are also different divisions, especially in the case of the so-called 'middle schools', which pupils enter at ages varying from case to case. Turning to the North American continent, there is a greater difference in the criteria for determining periods in the United States, where the idea of the 'middle school' has also become widespread in recent decades, so that schools which give eight years of primary education quite frequently divide them into cycles (4—4 or 5—3).

In Eastern Europe, especially in countries which provide a long period of primary education, it is frequently divided into two cycles, sometimes of equal length, as in Czechoslovakia and Hungary where the principal criterion for differentiation is that of the single teacher for the first cycle classes. In Poland, on the other hand, the division occurs after the fifth year. In the German Democratic Republic, the six-year period, which we have considered here as corresponding to primary education, is divided into two cycles of three years each ('lower' and 'intermediate' respectively).

As far as Africa is concerned, we might mention, for example, the cases of Kenya with its primary education divided into two cycles, 'lower' and 'higher'; Rwanda, with three cycles (3-3-2); Senegal, which continues to reflect current French influence in its names for the three cycles ('preparatory', 'elementary' and 'intermediate'); and Uganda, with two cycles of three years ('small children') and four years ('higher').

In Latin America, Chile has for a long time divided primary education into two equal cycles of four years each. In Peru, there are also two cycles of four and two years respectively, and, whenever possible, the differentiating criterion is the use of several teachers in the higher cycle in place of the single teacher. Venezuela uses the same division, calling the first cycle the 'instrumental' one (grades 1 to 4) and the second the 'cultural integration cycle' (grades 5 and 6). In this country, however, they are beginning to apply the new basic education of nine years, which calls for a division into three cycles of four, three and two years respectively.

Since the criteria for division into periods are repetitive and, what is even more important, undergo frequent changes, we shall limit ourselves to two more cases. As we have already seen, it is questionable whether one can describe the whole of elementary education in India as the primary level. Moreover, this doubt is increased by the present terminology according to which the entire period is divided into two cycles, which are specifically designated 'primary' and 'intermediate'. Lastly, mention should be made of the new basic education in Algeria, divided into three cycles of three years each, of which the first two can be properly termed primary education.

To sum up, it is hard to draw any general conclusions from such a wide variety. Perhaps it is worthwhile noting that division into periods is frequently seen as an element for improving the quality of education, since in some way it makes it necessary to determine more accurately the objectives to be achieved and sometimes even the subjects to be learned.

As the reader will no doubt agree, up to now we have limited ourselves to the actual *formal* structure of the sub-systems of primary education, without referring to the frequent existence of other institutional structures which cover *non-formal* educational or teaching procedures. In the interests of greater clarity, this important aspect has been postponed until later pages, more specifically during the discussion of existing types of establishments or institutions which endeavour to achieve, either formally or non-formally, the objectives of primary education.

2. THE LIMITS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

A large part of the world population has never known any other school than the primary school, assuming that it has known any at all. Concerning this vast majority, there would be no point whatever in questioning the use to which this education is put, which would be to satisfy the needs of the family, the community and the working environment. The needs of this extensive population will be dealt with in later pages, but now we have to concentrate on the organizational structure which makes it possible, to a greater or lesser extent,

for primary education to be introduced at the right time and to pave the way, upon its completion, for other educational opportunities. Before anything else, this presupposes some brief consideration of the ages which are considered most suitable for its beginning and its end. Afterwards we must consider the connection of these systems with the preceding stage (pre-school education) and the subsequent stage (secondary education). In the following pages, we will take particular account of the countries which answered the ICE questionnaire.

Entrance and leaving ages

Since there are cases where the totals do not coincide, we shall, for greater clarity, consider the entrance and leaving ages for primary education separately. As in previous cases, Table 4 expresses the number of countries belonging to each region where the first grade begins or ends at one or other age[1].

TABLE 4. Number of countries per region according to ages for entering and leaving primary education

	Entrance age in years			Total countries
	5	6	7	
Africa	2	14	6	22
Latin America	1	10	3	14
Asia and Oceania	3	10	2	15*
Arab States	—	7	1	8
Western Europe and North America	3	12	3	18
Eastern Europe	—	3	6	9
Total	9	56	21	86*

	Leaving age in years						Total countries
	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Africa	—	3	11*	4*	4	1	23*
Latin America	—	2	7	3	1	1	14
Asia and Oceania	1	6*	5*	2	1	—	15*
Arab States	—	—	7	—	1	—	8
Western Europe and North America	2	6	7*	1	3*	1	20*
Eastern Europe	3	—	1	—	2	3	9
Total	6	17	38	10	12	6	89

It is evident that the most frequent ages for entering and leaving are 6 and 12 years respectively. However, there seems to be a much wider tendency to enter at age 6 than to leave at age 12.

In any case, note should be taken of the large number of countries where primary education begins at age 7. In Eastern Europe, these countries are in the majority, with the exception of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic, as well as some parts of Yugoslavia. In Western Europe, this same practice is widespread in the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden in the case of those considered here). Likewise, in the African continent there is a large number which have established the same entrance age: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It has been adopted by three countries in Latin America (Brazil, Nicaragua and Paraguay) and by only one in the Arab States (Morocco). In both China and Indonesia, it is customary to begin primary education at age 6, but beginning at age 7 is also widespread.

The European countries which permit entrance at age 5 are Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom. In Asia and Oceania, there are New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In Africa, this rule applies only to Mauritius, although it is occasionally observed in Benin. Lastly, in Latin America and the Caribbean, children are accustomed to enter at this age only in the Bahamas.

Let us now turn to the leaving ages indicated in Table 4. Although there seems to be a preference to accept age 12 as the customary age, we find not only that the options are more widely divided but that the range itself of these options is more extensive, covering six age groups — between 10 and 15 years. Age 12 is represented by seventeen countries. This includes countries whose primary education lasts for five years (Colombia, France, Madagascar, etc.), together with countries which, while having a primary grade of six years, begin it one year earlier (England and Wales, New Zealand, etc.). However, there are more countries where primary education usually ends *after* the pupils have reached age 12 (twenty-eight) than countries where it normally ends before this age (twenty-three). This confirms the tendency towards considering primary education as a fairly long period. Concerning the six countries which provide for a very late leaving age (at age 15), most of them are those which have eight years of primary education and begin it at age 7 (Brazil, Bulgaria, Poland, Rwanda, Yugoslavia). The other country is Sweden, which, according to its report, while considering its integrated school equivalent to primary education, provides for it to conclude one year later, at age 16. At the other extreme, there are also six countries where primary education is concluded at a very early age. We have already dealt with three of them (Byelorussian SSR, Ukrainian SSR, USSR); the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria have also been referred to. The one in Asia is Pakistan, although it should be explained in this case

the age of 10 years is more theoretical than real, since the pupils who complete the grade are frequently older.

It is necessary to draw attention to the lack of any concordance between some of the data relating to the entrance and leaving ages for the primary grade and those given in Unesco's *Statistical yearbook*, 1985 edition. Thus, for example, the *Yearbook* assigns to Ireland six years of primary education, while Ireland's report states that: 'Primary education in Ireland is an eight-year programme provided in a national network of schools known as "national or primary schools"' [2]. There is likewise no coincidence in the case of Turkey. This country's report clearly states that formal primary education 'comprises the age groups of 6 to 14' [3]. Sweden has likewise been referred to before. Taking due account of the fact that the Swedish report identifies the integrated school as a centre of primary education, this is certainly the criterion we have to accept, although subject to the reservations already made above. We shall return to these important points later.

Borderlines with pre-school education

Although this is not the right place to get involved with a discussion of terminology, it seems necessary to refer to the lack of precision in the term 'pre-school', at least in so far as it concerns us here. 'Pre-school' would seem to be something necessarily prior to formal education, i.e. prior to the time when the child enters a school for the first time. Obviously, this is not the case; but it is rather a level or grade prior to primary education or, at the most, prior to compulsory education. Nevertheless, recent trends also force us to accept even this interpretation with considerable caution. In fact, there are some countries (Mozambique, for example) which include a so-called pre-school year in their primary education system. Sri Lanka also includes a 'pre-grade' year. The reform which has already begun in the USSR will include a new preparatory year or course both in primary and in compulsory education, so that the entrance age will be put back to age 6. Then, there is a whole group of countries which begin primary education at age 5, and in these cases (that of England and Wales, for example, with its 'infant schools') it is logical to ask whether the first period of school attendance should not be considered a period of pre-school education. The outstanding feature of the reform which began in the Netherlands in 1985 is the complete union of what up to that time had been pre-school education and primary education, which in practice means that the latter will absorb the former and enrolment will move towards age 4. While looking towards a redefinition of primary education, in the years to come there should be a much stronger move towards a redefinition of pre-school educa-

tion as an autonomous educational level. At the present time, there is no doubt that the borderlines between both levels are becoming more imprecise everyday.

In practice, what really helps to draw a distinction between both levels is the rate of attendance in pre-school education. In those countries (such as Belgium, France or Netherlands) where this rate is very high — close to 100 per cent in the last pre-school year — classes for this level are usually part of primary schools, so that the transition may take place as an uninterrupted process. On the other hand, the existence of pre-school classes within primary schools is fairly widespread, even in countries where the enrolment rate at pre-school level is lower. To sum up, the borderlines between both levels are more or less distinct depending on whether there is a greater or lesser degree of institutional independence between them.

In this respect, the case of the Federal Republic of Germany is a fairly good illustration. Leaving aside the case of Hamburg and other experiments combining pre-school and primary education, the traditional independence of the kindergartens makes it difficult to integrate the system. Führ has shown that although in 1975 most children attended kindergartens, only 6 per cent of them attended pre-school classes associated with primary schools. From this he has drawn the following reasonable conclusion: 'It is to be expected that in the immediate future the kindergartens will continue to be, as they are now, a special type of pre-school education, with their own independent organization outside the primary cycle'[4].

The same might be said about many other countries where pre-school education has always enjoyed high prestige and where, in spite of being fairly widespread, it prefers to maintain an independent position. Nor would it seem that this phenomenon is significantly influenced by the greater or lesser involvement of the private sector at the pre-school level. Countries where there is a high proportion of private participation, such as in the Netherlands or Belgium, are placing great emphasis on the need for introducing integration which might be officially supervised. In this connection, attention should be drawn to the interesting experiment which is being conducted in a large group of Belgian schools, frequently called the '5-8 cycle', in which children of pre-school age (5 and 6) are brought together in an uninterrupted sequence with primary pupils of ages 6 to 8. On the other hand, other countries which have much smaller private participation at this level, Denmark for instance, seem to be less enthusiastic about integrating the two levels, as well as even about any pronounced generalization of pre-school education. We might recall that in the survey prepared by the World Organization for Early Childhood Education, the results of which were analysed by Mialaret[5], Denmark was one of the most reluctant countries to acknowledge institutionalized pre-

school education as the sole or preferable form of education for children of less than 6 years of age.

As already suggested at the beginning of this section, the borderlines between the pre-school and the primary level have received special attention in developed countries. This does not mean that they are unimportant in other systems. In Gabon, for example, Law 16/66 already recognized some time ago the importance of the problem when it established age 4 as the beginning of regular school enrolment, without establishing any connection between this period and primary education proper. However, the great majority of developing countries still have only a few pre-school educational centres (Gabon itself is no exception in this respect), which are generally to be found only in the big urban centres or else prefer to accept children only from the higher classes.

On the other hand, African societies have traditionally valued many other forms of education for small children which have not been institutionalized in any formal sense. To many African peoples, if not to all, what is still fully applicable is the rather poetic picture of education which was extolled by Jomo Kenyatta[6] in the face of European customs and which is solidly based on the gradual integration of the very young child into family and tribal life.

All in all, pre-school educational institutions have been steadily increasing since 1970, and in some countries they have managed to attract a considerable number of staff members. Although, generally speaking, private institutions are still most numerous, in quite a few cases the increase has been the result of much greater involvement by public establishments. This applies to other developing countries, both Latin American and Asian. This has done no more than confirm the conviction that success in primary school is frequently related to the prior education received in pre-school institutions. As Mialaret has written:

Pre-school education must also be considered in relation to primary education from another standpoint: that of scholastic achievement and social success. For a number of reasons mentioned earlier, pre-school education is costly, and it is generally less well developed in the poor countries than in the rich ones. Within one and the same country, too, it is more accessible to the privileged classes of society than it is to the poor. All the findings shown in this survey bear out this statement. This means that a child in an affluent country, or a child whose family is well off, has a better chance of receiving a pre-school education than less fortunate children. It also means that he will have a better chance of success at school and therefore later in life. So the inequitable development of pre-school education, despite the concern with social justice implicit in its goals, is yet another factor in social segregation, which must be recognized and resisted[7].

However, while the mere fact of going through a period of pre-school education constitutes an important foundation for successful entrance into primary school, especially for children from underprivileged classes, it is also important that this period should not be established in glorious isolation but in close

relation to the one following it. This is the spirit which seems to have inspired certain reforms and experiments already referred to. In those countries where primary education has traditionally begun at age 7, there is support for a movement which tends to generalize, and even to make compulsory, the year in the preceding stage, thus beginning school at age 6. This has been the case in Bulgaria since 1981 and in the USSR since 1984. Poland, which has set the beginning of primary education at age 7, has practically generalized school enrolment among 6-year-old children. We can conclude, therefore, first, that this age is almost universally taken as the borderline between levels, and, secondly, that there is also an increasing belief everywhere that with due regard for each country's institutional traditions, this borderline should rather be converted into an easily accessible bridge.

Borderlines with secondary education

In spite of the lack of precision referred to above, it can nevertheless be asserted that the borderlines in the formal education system between pre-school level and the primary level and between the secondary level and third or higher level are fairly obvious. On the other hand, things become considerably more complex when we have to establish the borderline between the primary and secondary levels. We have already observed some discrepancies between the data provided by Unesco's *Statistical yearbook* and those found in the national reports concerning the length of grades and cycles. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), however useful it is for statistical purposes, was nevertheless prepared on the basis of criteria which were being revised even as they were drawn up, and which have continued to be revised ever since. We should point out that what ISCED calls 'second-level education' begins at an approximate age of 11 or 12 and is divided into two cycles (first and second). This formula can in fact be applied to a large number of countries, but the truth is that, for one reason or another, many others still seem to elude this classification.

Actually, there are a large group of education systems (see Table 4) which terminate primary education at ages 11 or 12. However, after this age many of them do not provide for a long and continuous stage of education within one institution which can be defined under any one name. On the contrary, it is fairly common that the next stage is rather short and has to be carried out by a different institution which, although distinctly different from that of primary education, is also different from the institution that follows. In most cases, this intermediate institution aims at goals of general instruction complementary to those of the preceding stage. Why, then, does its name connect it more closely to the following stage of education? It seems clear that this is for historic

reasons, reminiscent of past times when lengthy secondary studies were conducted within a single institution for élitist purposes.

Even education systems of the oldest tradition have been setting up institutions of an *intermediate* nature, which are equidistant from primary education and the traditional secondary education. Take, for example, the French *collège* or the German *Hauptschule*. In what way could the former be said to be closer to the *lycée* than to the *école élémentaire*? Should we consider the *Hauptschule* closer, in its objectives and in its configuration, to the higher cycle (*Oberstufe*) of the *Gymnasium* than to the *Grundschule* or primary school? On the contrary, it would be easier to admit that the borderlines which today separate institutions of an intermediate nature (*collège*, *Hauptschule*, etc.) from those of a secondary nature are usually more consistent than those which separate them from those of primary education.

The examinations with which primary education used to conclude, thus opening the way to lengthy secondary studies, have disappeared almost everywhere (this is what has happened, for example, to the famous British test known as the 'eleven plus examination'). On the other hand, the requirements for promotion from the intermediate schools to the secondary schools are being raised, at least in some of their academic details. However that might be, the recent tendency in some English-speaking countries (and more specifically in England and Wales and the United States) is to create 'middle schools' which illustrate the growing wish to avoid difficulties in passing from the primary school to the next higher institution.

While this is what has happened with traditional education systems, what is happening in more recent systems or those which are more open to structural reforms is even more significant. To put it briefly, many of them have incorporated what ISCED considers the first cycle of second-level education in the stage with which school enrolment began, a stage which is often clearly 'primary' or 'first-level education'. This not only concerns systems found in developing countries, even though many — but not all — of them have adopted this arrangement. It has also been adopted, for example, by many European countries, including almost all the Scandinavian and Eastern countries, besides some Mediterranean countries such as Spain and Turkey.

The preceding pages have frequently shown how difficult it is to determine the borderlines of primary education. For example, in the case of Turkey we have accepted what is stated in the national reports, leaving aside other considerations. But it should not be overlooked that in the case of that country there is, in spite of everything, a fairly clear division between the first five years of primary education and the three remaining years, not so much due to pedagogical reasons as to the fact that the second stage, although equally compulsory, now contains only 55 per cent of children between ages 12 and 14.

In the case of the USSR, the persistence of many separate primary schools, usually in rural areas, seemed to justify assigning three years to the period of primary education proper. But even this is more than questionable when we think that the really preponderant or most widespread institution is the one they describe as the 'complete or incomplete intermediate school' of ten or eight years respectively. If we look at the programme of studies of these schools, as we shall do later on, the difficulty of defining a borderline between one level and another becomes obvious. In reality, this institution (we are now referring especially to the eight year school and the educational reform now in progress) possesses complete unity with respect to its programmes and objectives.

The case of the Arab education systems is also very symptomatic. Although they have been assigned a period of six years (between ages 6 and 12), based on their national reports, it should be noted that almost all of them have already introduced a long preliminary stage in their institutional structure, which, depending on cases, is called 'fundamental' or 'basic' and which combines without a break, both education of the first level and the first cycle of the second level. Even the countries which have not yet applied this criterion show signs of moving in this direction in their reports: for example, when referring to primary education (of five years), Morocco's report states that 'its main purpose is to prepare pupils for entering secondary education'[8].

In Latin America, various countries have also adopted comprehensive basic education for the two first levels. Both Chile and Brazil consider it as equivalent to primary education. Brazil calls it 'first-grade education', which is very close to the terminology used by ISCED, but the duration assigned to this level greatly exceeds that provided for in ISCED. Colombia, which places a more restrictive interpretation on the concept of primary education, follows on with the subsequent stage without any separation. This is explicitly acknowledged in its report: 'The restructuring of the education system carried out in 1976 is aimed at ensuring continuity between the two stages of the basic cycle; that the transition from Primary Basic to Secondary Basic will not involve any abrupt change with regard to methodology'[9]. This same idea of continuity also underlies the recent Venezuelan reform, with its three equivalent and uninterrupted cycles within basic education.

In Asia and Oceania, the idea of establishing a similar form of basic or elementary education continues to gain ground. Besides India, to which we have already referred several times, Sri Lanka has since 1984 merged the two cycles into an elementary school of eight years, and Viet Nam is now doing the same, although with a basic education of nine years. Other countries continue to respect the autonomy of the directly post-primary institutions, as is the case of the Japanese *chugakko*, although it can be said that while the latter is also a

institution of general education, it is more a continuation of the primary school (*shogakko*) than a forerunner of the higher secondary school (*kotogakko*). In New Zealand, on the other hand, a certain tendency in the opposite direction can be discerned, since many secondary schools admit pupils of 11 years of age from the last primary year. Nevertheless, what seems to be behind this phenomenon is the gradual consolidation of the intermediate school as a separate institutional unit between its neighbours, such as is happening in Japan or in other, especially European, countries.

As far as Africa is concerned, not a few countries have also established a rather lengthy primary education, with a tendency to combine the two levels we are now considering. In Kenya, for example, starting in 1985, primary education has been extended to eight years. This means that in many cases the changeover from primary to secondary levels has already been extended to 13 or 14 years of age. That is to say when primary education is not terminal.

Concerning this last point, the Questionnaire prepared by the International Bureau of Education, which served as a basis for drafting the national reports of the ICE and which we are using as a primary source, asked the Member States of Unesco whether or not they considered that education *terminated* with primary school[10]. The replies approached this question in different ways, either from the point of view of the current legislation, or on the basis of the pedagogical objectives of the primary level, or in the light of actual practice. The report of Bangladesh, for example, acknowledged that, while primary education is not considered final, it is in fact terminal for a great majority of pupils. Some countries, which in principle do not envisage it as being final, add one or two supplementary years so that pupils who have fallen behind can complete it and even acquire some vocational skills (this is the case, as we have seen, in Tunisia and to some extent in the Central African Republic). But what should be emphasized here is that very few reports admit that primary education *should* be final for the majority of citizens — even if it lasts for only seven or eight years. In the case of the developing countries, in particular, this naturally leaves open the question of what kind of subsequent stage they hope to establish in the future. However, this is not a question which should concern us here.

3. DIFFERENT TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

One feature which undoubtedly characterizes modern educational organization is the search for simplified criteria or, put another way, the avoidance of the present complexity involved in planning and setting up educational institutions. Leaving aside the ideological or political connotations which are also

undeniably attached to it, the 'single school' has often found supporters and promoters who are animated by motives of an organizational kind and desirous of introducing a certain order into complex, unequal and many-faceted situations. Sometimes, in order not to exaggerate totalitarian tendencies, there has been a preference for talking about the need for a 'unified school'. In any case, we must hasten to explain that when these objectives have actually been striven for, they have never been completely achieved. It is sufficient to observe the panorama of institutional diversity offered us by the present education systems at both the primary and other levels.

Even when there has been an attempt to realize the ideal of the 'single school' the existing institutional diversity has been slow to disappear and has not infrequently reappeared after a certain time. Strictly speaking, the introduction of the 'single school' has generally led to the disappearance of the 'private school' (although not necessarily of 'private education' in all its various forms), but not of institutional diversity as a whole. In many cases, the adoption of the idea of the 'single school' has not prevented the contrast between, for example, rural, urban and suburban schools, unified and graded schools, well equipped and poorly equipped schools, popular schools and élite schools.

We must begin by pointing out that ever since the middle of this century the ideals of both the 'single school' and the 'unified school' have led to many experiments. As well as being widespread in Eastern Europe, the idea of the 'single school' has been applied under various forms, such as the 'people's school' in the Congo, the 'centre of revolutionary education' in Guinea, or the similar types of single-teacher general schools established in China, Cuba, Mozambique, Viet Nam, etc. Although usually respecting private initiative, the ideal of the 'unified schools' has aimed in different ways at the organizational uniformity of all public and private centres, at least in their basic aspects.

Nevertheless, the typological diversity of institutions still persists. The next few pages will be devoted to this subject in order to give the reader an approximate idea of what primary schools are like throughout the world.

Obviously, only the most representative ones will be mentioned. The differences are based on various factors, such as: the administrative dependence and source of financing (which leads to the presence of public, private, subsidized and non-subsidized schools, etc.); educational organization and the number of teachers (schools which are graded or not graded, unitary, with several teachers, etc.); geographic and environmental location (rural, urban, suburban schools, etc.); the school hours (full day, morning, evening, etc.); their size and their particular pedagogical, religious or linguistic character, etc. We should also devote some attention to special education schools since the great major-

ity of them cover primary education, as well as other institutions and programmes of an unconventional nature.

Public and private schools

The differences between schools are characterized not only by how they are financed but also by the circumstances of their foundation and their organizational dependence. In order not to lead to erroneous interpretations, we have preferred to use the term 'public schools' to describe all those institutions which are created, managed and maintained by the public authorities, whether federal, national, state, regional, municipal, etc. In Belgium, for example, they prefer to use the term 'official schools' for the public ones and 'free schools' for the private ones. With respect to the former, other countries (Malta, for example) prefer to speak of 'government schools'. In Mexico, there is a distinction between 'federal schools' (maintained by the federation) and 'state schools' (maintained by each state), while those created by private initiative are usually known as 'private schools'. In Malawi, the distinction is mainly on the basis of financing, so that they speak of 'assisted schools', not only to describe those dependent on public support (of two kinds: national and local), but also the 'voluntary' schools (usually founded by religious associations) which receive public financing. The 'voluntary' schools which do not receive such assistance are called 'unassisted schools', while there are also schools under the generic name of 'private schools', dependent on private individuals, which do not receive financial assistance either.

The fact that they receive public financing, which is sometimes substantial and occasionally total, has in many respects often blurred the distinction between public schools and private establishments. For example, this is what happened in the United Kingdom, especially after the Education Act of 1944. For its subsequent influence on the legislation of other countries, it is interesting to describe the types of school established by this Act:

- 'Maintained county schools', created and maintained by the local education authorities (LEA).
- 'Maintained voluntary schools', created by a private entity, but maintained to a greater or lesser extent by the LEA. Many of these schools have been and still are of a religious nature (Anglican, Roman Catholic, etc.), and depending on whether the financing they receive is in full or in part, they are more or less dependent on the local authorities, being divided into 'controlled schools', 'aided schools' (the most numerous) and 'special agreement schools'.
- 'Non-maintained direct grant schools' owe their name to the fact that they are directly subsidized by the central ministry. Since most of these are secondary education schools, they do not concern us here.

- 'Non-maintained independent schools', or private schools which receive no official assistance.

France undoubtedly took the British precedent into account when it regularized assistance to private schools at the end of 1959 by the so-called Debré Act, which offered them specific kinds of assistance, especially a 'contract of association' (which paid for the teachers and helped defray the operating expenses) or a 'simple agreement' by which the schools — many of them primary schools — were able to pay the salaries of some teachers. Although great efforts were made to amend this legislation early in the 1980s, it finally proved impossible to put through the planned reform.

The reform planned in Spain seems to have been more successful. The Organic Law of the Right to Education (LODE) of 1985 divides the private establishments into 'associated' or 'unassociated' schools, depending on whether or not they have entered into an agreement with the State which makes economic aid possible within certain limits and subject to specific conditions.

The first chapter of this study has already dealt with the extension of private primary education in the world today. Since we are now only interested in the typology of the centres, one more question might be expressed, as follows: at the threshold of the twenty-first century, is it possible to regard private primary schools as *élitist*?

It is sufficient to cast a glance at the international panorama in order to realize that it would be possible to answer in the affirmative. Without denying the existence, in many countries, of primary schools to which this might apply, it must be added that on the contrary there are many institutions based on private initiative which extend primary education to the neediest social classes. The very ideas of '*élite*' and '*private education*' are obviously undergoing change. Of course, the socio-economic *élites*, actual or potential, always find some way to educate their children differently. This may be through expensive private institutions, as is frequently the case in many British '*preparatory schools*' or similar schools to be found in Europe, the United States, Canada and, naturally enough, in developing countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Oceania. But the same result may be achieved through public schools in wealthy residential quarters, as was actually pointed out by Kirton with reference to the United States[11], a country, moreover, which has no reason to constitute an exception in this respect. In Gabon, for example, the so-called '*associated public schools*' are in fact centres reserved for the French population and some socially prominent Gabonese residing in Libreville, Port-Gentil and Franceville. Moreover, today other interpretations of the word '*élite*' are becoming current which should not escape our attention. For example, let us consider the schools provided for exceptionally gifted children.

or simply for children of above-average intelligence in countries like the USSR (with special courses in mathematics, foreign languages, etc.) as well as elsewhere.

The idea of 'private education' has also changed greatly, especially since many of these schools throughout the world are actually financed, sometimes wholly, from public funds. For a long time, therefore, the English have preferred to use the expression 'voluntary schools' when referring to this category and reserve the term 'private' to those they list as independent. In Belgium, as we said before, the term preferred in official terminology is 'free schools', an expression which has also gained considerable ground — not without protest — in other countries.

Graded and non-graded schools

The 'graded' school has traditionally been contrasted with the 'unitary school', a school with a single teacher. Today, however, so many different solutions have been adopted that it is hard to preserve this duality. Consequently, it is better to speak of 'graded' and 'non-graded' schools.

A 'graded school' is understood as being one where the pupils are grouped together, on the basis of their mental development or level of knowledge, in successive years or courses, each of which is supervised by at least one teacher. In countries where primary education has been firmly established and widespread for some time, this grouping by levels of mental development always or almost always coincides with a grouping by ages. In countries with a deficient or lower level of education, we usually find that pupils of different ages — sometimes with a span of three or four years between them — share the same level of mental development and consequently are members of the same course or year. The larger graded schools usually have not only as many years or courses as are called for by their curriculum but also more than one group of pupils per course. Here we shall refer to these various divisions or groupings within one and the same course as 'units'.

Throughout the world, the 'graded school' has become the prototype primary education school. In many countries, a sharp distinction is made between graded schools with a 'complete cycle' (the terminology frequently varies from one country to another) and those with an 'incomplete cycle'. The latter name — or one similar to it — refers to a school which, although organized into classes, does not include all the years or classes which make up the entire period of primary education, but only a few and usually the early ones. In Gabon, for example, there are schools with a complete cycle (with six years or classes) in the cities, while there are some with an incomplete cycle in the rural areas. In Senegal, the ones listed directly as 'urban schools' are those comprising ten or more units which usually also have a complete cycle. The reports

of many Latin American countries (Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, etc.) also refer to complete and incomplete graded schools. In Asia and Oceania there are important differences in this respect between some countries and others. While the graded school (which is generally complete) represents the norm in Japan and is also widespread in the Republic of Korea, Indonesia (with 85 per cent of graded schools), New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Thailand, it is in a minority in other countries like India, where only 14 per cent of schools have five or more teachers (of whom, moreover, very few can handle the complete cycle of elementary education, which, as we know, lasts for eight years). It should be pointed out that in New Zealand only schools capable of providing eight years of primary education are considered 'complete schools' while those which offer only six years (a practice which, as we have seen, is becoming more frequent) are classified as 'contributing schools'[12]. In Arab countries, the graded school has also made great progress, especially in urban areas, while another type of grouping is used only in rural areas. And as far as Europe and North America are concerned, the system of central schools made possible by the extensive use of school transport facilities, has changed almost all schools into graded and, for the most part, complete schools.

However, there are still many non-graded schools in countries with a widely scattered population (as in France, where there are still 12,000 schools with only one classroom or Finland, where 16 per cent of the schools are still unitary). In the USSR, there are still about 40,000 three-year primary schools, generally with only one teacher, which might seem a rather large number unless it is compared with the eight-year 'incomplete' intermediate schools numbering about 45,000 and the ten-year 'complete' intermediate schools numbering 55,000. (It should be recalled again that these intermediate schools always include the primary education classes.) But if we take into account the number of pupils who enter these schools we find that, while barely 1 million pupils enter the strictly primary, three-year schools, more than 40 million enter the two other types.

In the non-graded schools, the typology of schools varies considerably, not only between countries, but even at times within one and the same country. The generally accepted organization criterion is that of the number of pupils who really attend, or can attend, school in a given population centre. In Cyprus, for example, it is prescribed that where there are fewer than twenty-four pupils the schools can have only one teacher who is responsible for all years and classes. If there are more than twenty-four and fewer than forty, two teachers are provided; up to seventy-five pupils there will be three teachers in the school. And the same proportion continues up to the complete schools where six teachers or more, each of whom can then take charge of one class per year.

In general, as far as Europe is concerned, what is frequently found — in the case of non-graded schools — are two or at the most three classes with a single teacher, and these courses are almost always the early ones. This is the case, for example, in Luxembourg or in France, where there are still around 28,000 incomplete primary schools with between two and four classes (not to mention the 12,000 unitary schools we referred to above). In Sweden there are also schools in rural areas which have two or three classes. But whenever possible there is a preference in all countries for the graded school, even incomplete. In Portugal, for example, there are still many primary schools which have only the four primary classes, although in a graded form; in these cases the last two years of 'basic school' — the so-called 'preparatory cycle' — are taught by television.

The Arab countries still have to depend on schools with only one teacher, but there is a tendency, as in Europe, to have groups of only a few classes. In Qatar, two classes can be held together only in rural areas where the number of pupils per course does not exceed seven. One unconventional institution which might be mentioned here is the school in Morocco for completing the primary education of pupils who have, during the preceding two or three years, attended the traditional Koranic schools: this type of institution provides, generally in graded form, three years — corresponding to the last ones — of primary education. It is also of interest to mention the graded schools in Tunisia which even add two more years of vocational training to the six years of the regular course.

In Asia and Oceania, the graded system is also used whenever possible (as in Sri Lanka, where only 1 per cent of the schools have only one teacher for two or more classes), but the number of unitary schools is still quite high in countries like China, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Viet Nam, etc. To mention a few figures, we might note that in India 35 per cent of the schools have only one teacher and 62 per cent of them have only two.

Almost all the educational reforms introduced in Latin America in the last few decades have advocated the adoption of the graded school, although the number of unitary schools is still considerable in many countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela). In Colombia, what are generally known as 'new schools' are those which have only one classroom and not more than three teachers to teach the five years of primary education. In Venezuela, the expression 'concentrated schools' is applied in particular to schools which represent the combination of two or more unitary schools, although they are not necessarily graded schools. In Bahamas and Jamaica, there are 'all-age schools' which accept children between 5 and 14, where they are taught by one or more teachers.

As far as the African continent is concerned, there is also a tendency towards

organizing schools of only two or three classes in rural areas. This is frequently the case in Benin, where there are separate sections made up of classes 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6. However, there is still a large number of schools with only one teacher in most of the countries of the continent.

In general, the graded primary schools assign a single teacher for each class per year. The principal exceptions to this rule are to be found in those countries which have adopted a lengthy period of primary or elementary education, as in the case of the Scandinavian and Eastern European countries where the one-teacher system is practised only in the early years (generally age 4 to 6) and afterwards replaced by the system of several teachers who are specialists in certain fields of disciplines. This system is also applied, whenever possible, in developing countries where primary education also lasts for a long period of time. Earlier applications have occurred only at the experimental level (as in some schools in the Federal Republic of Germany we have already referred to). It should be pointed out, however, that forms which could be described as coming under the 'assisted one-teacher system' also exist. These schools start originally with only one teacher per class but encourage the involvement of other teachers for such subjects as physical education, music, manual skills, etc.

With large numbers of pupils, it is also uncommon to find forms other than the homogeneous groupings, by levels of development, which are typical of graded schools. It is only at the experimental level, in centres of advanced teaching, that other ways of organizing the class are making their appearance. This is happening in particular in Europe and North America, but not there alone. In Bahamas, for example, there are 'open situation' schools where between 50 and 130 pupils are grouped together under a team of teachers. However, team teaching has not met with the acceptance which was originally predicted for it, at least at the general level. Experiments are being conducted with other methodologies based on different forms of grouping, as in the case of the experiments, already mentioned, which are being conducted in various African countries to solve the problem of overcrowded classrooms. But the problems of numbers should be analysed separately.

Co-educational and separate schools

Co-education means the joint primary education of boys and girls (the reports of some countries also use the expression 'mixed education' to describe a situation where there is a mixture of ages or levels in the classroom).

We must begin by recognizing that the effort to generalize primary education in the last few decades has been based on co-education or co-instruction. Governments acting on the basis of the opposite principle constitute

exception. Hence the most important differences are to be found not so much in the application of opposing principles as with the greater or lesser permissiveness with which the central or local authorities view the matter.

Today, the existence of separate schools for boys and girls is especially obvious in countries of the Islamic religion. Most of the Arab countries have schools for males and females, as well as co-educational schools. One of them (Saudi Arabia) has an entire central administration (the Administration of Women's Education) completely separate from the Ministry of Education. The latter remains responsible for the pedagogical aspects and for boys' schools. The Islamic Republic of Iran applies the principle of separation without any exceptions. 'There is no co-educational system in Iran. While the content of the educational programme is the same for males and females, the schools are separated by sexes (boys go to boys' schools and girls to girls' schools)'[13]. But today most of the countries which are wholly or partly Islamic in Africa, Asia and Oceania apply a more moderate policy in this respect.

Today, most non-Islamic countries apply co-educational principles as far as the public sector is concerned. In this connection, attention should be drawn to the change which has occurred in countries with a Catholic majority, which were formerly opposed to the expansion of co-educational schools. In recent years, the co-educational system has been adopted even by many Catholic schools (this trend originated in the United States). Nevertheless, except for the countries of Eastern Europe (where the co-educational system is generally applied without exception), there are still some schools almost everywhere which practise separation. It is still not unusual to find signs along the French highways which warn of the presence of an *école de garçons* or an *école de filles*. The great majority of separate schools throughout the world, however, are based on private initiative. It cannot be said that they show any signs of disappearing.

Religious schools

All over the world, there are many private schools of a religious nature. In some places they are public schools, as in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where private schools were abolished following the Islamic Revolution. All Islamic countries usually have 'Koranic schools' which to a greater or lesser extent enjoy official status and are financed by the State, as, for example, in Egypt with its so-called *Al-Azhar* primary institutes. In Indonesia, there are many schools known as *Ibtidaiyah Islamic*, which naturally emphasize religious teaching. In Bangladesh, the *Madrasahs* constitute a complete parallel system with their *Ibtedayee* or four-year primary school which, in order to complete

the regular primary course of five years, has to be followed by one more year in the *Dhakid* or six-year secondary school; in that country there are also *Furquania Madrasahs*, schools which care for the most disadvantaged Muslims. Like other African countries with a Muslim population, Nigeria also has its *Islamiyyah* and Koranic schools.

There are Christian schools in practically all continents and in almost all countries, except those under a communist regime where religious teaching is officially prohibited (at least at the primary education level). The most numerous are undoubtedly the Catholic ones, although there are also Anglican and various Protestant denominations and Greek Orthodox schools. Many of them receive government subsidies and are not very different from the public schools. This is the case in the United Kingdom with its 'voluntary schools' (Catholic and Anglican especially) and in Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and other countries where there is a large number of Catholic schools. They are also to be found, in greater or lesser numbers, in Africa. Mauritius, for example, has 20 per cent of subsidized Catholic schools (to be sure, there are also two Hindu schools in that country). Catholic schools are particularly numerous in North and South America.

Although in a minority, Hebrew schools are also found in many Western countries. In Israel, of course, they are not a minority: approximately 30 per cent of the school population attend the State religious schools, among which should be included the autonomous *Aqudat Visrael* network.

Language schools

It is obvious that many bilingual or multilingual countries possess school systems which are distinguished only by the language taught there. This is the case, for example, in the USSR where the schools have obviously uniform features, in spite of the number of native languages used in primary education. The Belgian school system is now tending towards an obvious regionalization but, while this does not affect any basic structures, the main feature which distinguishes schools using different languages (Flemish, French and German) is precisely the linguistic feature. Something similar can be said of Spain where primary education in Catalan, Basque and Galician has been completely legal since 1978. Other countries, like Switzerland and Canada, have other differences besides linguistic ones which are the result of their traditionally federal nature.

In any case, the differences in schools based on the language used by them are only obvious, and sometimes questionably so, when these schools are found together in the same city or some restricted territorial zone. This is when the typical problems of bilingualism appear, which will be dealt with later. Th

situation occurs rather frequently in nations which have gained their independence in this century and whose cultural and educational institutions have inevitably preserved all the features — including the language — of the former metropolis. In Africa, Cameroon is the typical example of a country with two distinct education systems, using two different languages, both imported. Most African countries are undergoing a process in which their own vernacular languages are being reintroduced in the primary school, but they are still unwilling to give up the cultural advantages which their pupils might obtain from the correct use of the old colonial language. In some cases, as in some African and Asian countries, and to a great extent in India, the imported European language still serves as a very useful means of communication, even between citizens of the same country.

The basic problem of distinguishing between schools in the same country on the grounds of the language used, as well as of the use of two languages — the local and the imported languages — in one and the same school is always a problem of considerable cultural and social significance, a problem which goes far beyond the purely linguistic aspect. In his study of biculturalism and bilingualism, concerning the countries of the Maghreb and Lebanon, Fitouri says with reference to Tunisia something applicable to many other countries which is worth repeating here:

The Tunisian education system is based much more on biculturalism than on bilingualism. In fact, learning the French language by Tunisian students is never — and never has been — conceived of as merely learning a foreign language. Whether under the Protectorate (with French-Arabic schools) or under the regime of independence, the French language has always been treated not only as an official language but rather as a privileged language and the language of privileged people. ... As the school is the reflection of social reality, the early learning of the French language in the Tunisian schools has always aimed, beyond a mastery of the language itself, at accustoming the student to the entire culture transmitted by this language[14].

This is really the reason for the distinction made between the schools in the same country with regard to the common language used by them. And this is also the reason why the schools which use foreign languages are considered — to a small degree everywhere but especially in developing countries — as elitist schools. This aureole is not dimmed even in the case of countries possessing majority languages. We need only recall the social prestige enjoyed in the USSR, as well as in countries of a very different stamp, by schools which specialize in some foreign language.

Differences in time schedules

In a subsequent section, the schedules of school work which are considered normal or most common will be analysed. But first, the existence of different

kinds of schools will be examined on the basis of the amount of time to devote to their pupils.

Although as a rule primary schools all over the world prefer to conduct their school work in the morning and early afternoon, there are other factors which favour the adoption of different schedules or even the creation of institutions using special hours of the day.

In many developing countries it is necessary to work in two shifts — one in the morning and one in the afternoon — because of the lack of classroom space. Among many examples, this is the case in Cuba, China, Ethiopia, India, Nicaragua, Malaysia, etc. Other countries which have a larger number of schools are also accustomed to using the two-shift system in order to increase the efficiency of their school buildings (as in Romania, the USSR and other Eastern European countries). Certain countries, out of sheer necessity, have even introduced as many as three and four shifts (Brazil and Nicaragua, among others).

As a general rule, the evening shifts in regular schools — or those institutions opened expressly for this purpose — are especially intended for persons who are already of working age and have not completed their primary studies. Their courses are often held between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. There are many countries with arrangements of this kind, especially those with a high percentage of uneducated or only partly educated young people and adults. In Iraq it is possible to enrol in courses of this kind at the age of 16. Other countries admit younger pupils, provided that they are older than the normal age for school attendance. The number of hours these institutions or shifts normally allow for teaching is lower than that in the regular schools. In Nicaragua, for example, it is four hours, while the ordinary (daily) schedule is five. In most cases, it is assumed that the higher level of development of night students will enable them to attain the same objective in spite of the shorter schedule, but on some occasions they choose to eliminate or reduce certain subjects (for example, physical training) or to extend the length of the complete cycle by another year.

Another kind of institution which should be mentioned is the boarding school. These establishments have not been very popular in recent years. In certain countries, such as the USSR, there was a time — especially at the beginning of the 1960s — when the future of such schools seemed very promising, but subsequent events have not confirmed these expectations. People frequently considered these schools to be a kind of institution for problem children, orphans or those who have been abandoned (without forgetting that they are sometimes reserved for especially gifted children). In some countries with a widely scattered population the authorities set up boarding schools to encourage the concentration of pupils. Lastly, it should be

borne in mind that most boarding schools today are long-standing institutions which, to a greater or lesser extent, preserve an élitist character, such as the many 'preparatory schools' in the United Kingdom or similar schools in the United States, Canada, Europe and some developing countries where they are always financed by private initiative. In past times, many of them were religious schools (including many Catholic ones), but the responsible associations and congregations have either closed them down subsequently or converted them into ordinary schools.

Differences of size

The size of primary schools varies considerably, even in the same country; there can be little in common between the small one-teacher school of a sparsely inhabited village with its ten or twelve pupils, and the big city school with more than 1.000. Nevertheless, there can also be a differentiated typology between countries depending on how widely extended primary education is in them, which will obviously affect the number of classes and pupils which a school is accustomed to enrol.

Among the smallest we should have to include the schools on small Danish islands or in the wilds of Tierra del Fuego. The Russian *načalnaya škola*, even if it has pupils in all its three or four classes, is almost always, by its very nature, a school of small size and simple organization. In principle, the German or Austrian *Grundschule* has only four classes for four years and therefore, even if full, is tiny. On the other hand, a Swedish *grundskola*, with its nine courses divided into three cycles (*Lågstadium*, *Mellanstadium* and *Högstadium*), like the complete basic schools in other Scandinavian countries (the Finnish *peruskoulu*, the Danish *folkeskole* and the Norwegian *grunnskole*), are institutions of considerable size and complexity, although the schools which are exclusively for primary education (like the six-year Norwegian *barnskole*) seem to be less complicated.

Similarly, the complete eight-year schools in certain countries are quite large, such as, for example, the Hungarian *általános iskola*, the Czechoslovak *základní desítiletá škola*, the Spanish *colegio de educación general básica*, the elementary or basic schools of Chile, India, etc.

A school of average size might correspond to five- and six-year establishments, such as the French *école élémentaire*, the British primary school, the Greek *demotikon scholion*, the Japanese *shogakko*, the Indonesian *sekolah dasar*, etc.

The actual size of these institutions ordinarily depends on the number of classes they can accommodate, which varies greatly from country to country. Except in special cases, the general trend is to avoid establishing schools with

an excessive number of pupils. In any case, what the responsible educational authorities seem to be mostly concerned with is not so much the size of schools as the proportion of teachers to pupils.

In this respect, it is not always possible to get a clear idea about the degree of attendance and, on the other hand, the scarcity of pupils. For this there are generally two criteria: the number of pupils per classroom and the number of pupils per teacher (the pupil/teacher ratio). The reports sometimes refer to one criterion and sometimes the other, without explaining in every case which criterion is used. Moreover, the figures they supply often correspond to some official ratio or one established by the government and not always to the actual situation. Some reports also give the average ratio but frequently omit references to the sometimes extreme variations which may exist. Lastly, we must add that the data supplied in the reports rarely coincide with those given in the *Unesco Statistical yearbook*, which simply divides the total number of pupils enrolled in primary education by the total number of teachers assigned to this level.

From the large number of countries covered by the *Statistical yearbook*, Table 5 presents those which have a large number of pupils per teacher in primary education.

TABLE 5. Countries with a large number of pupils per teacher in primary education

More than 60:1	More than 50:1	More than 40:1
Central African Republic (69)	Ethiopia (59)	Burundi (49)
Chad (64)	Mozambique (59)	Burma (48)
Malawi (64)	Congo (58)	El Salvador (48)
	Madagascar (55)	Zambia (48)
	Rwanda (55)	Bangladesh (47)
	Lesotho (52)	Angola (46)
	Yemen (51)	Dominican Republic (46)
	Cameroon (50)	Mauritania (45)
		Togo (45)
		Djibouti (44)
		Gabon (44)
		Haiti (44)
		India (43)
		Nepal (43)
		United Republic of Tanzania (42)
		Liberia (41)
		Senegal (41)
		Republic of Korea (40)

We should note that most countries are on the African continent: the three with a ratio higher than 60; all those with more than 50 except Yemen; and the majority of those with more than 40. Among the latter, there are five Asian and three Latin American countries.

Comparing these data with those derived from the country reports in reply to the special IBE Questionnaire, we note that the Central African Republic has established an official ratio of 50:1, although it clearly states in its report that this figure is frequently higher, sometimes reaching 80 and even 85. Ethiopia has also established a ratio of 50:1, but its estimates do not refer to maximum figures but to what it considers to be a frequent proportion: that of 60:1. Mozambique gives the same official ratio as the *Statistical yearbook* (59:1), but explains that forty-nine is a fairly frequent number of pupils per classroom (but not per teacher), although it admits that this figure can sometimes amount to 100 pupils in over-populated areas. As far as other African countries with a high but more favourable ratio are concerned, Senegal reports considerably higher figures than those given in the *Yearbook*, setting a ratio of 54:1 for public schools and another of 43:1 for private schools. The official ratio given by the United Republic of Tanzania in its report is also slightly higher than the one given in the *Yearbook* (45:1 instead of 42:1). The figures for the Asian countries do not coincide either, although they come close.

We cannot compare these cases with those of the three Latin American countries, since none of them answered this part of the IBE Questionnaire, but the figures for other countries in the same area are in no way surprising, although they almost never coincide. (Incidentally, they are not excessively high; only Jamaica reports a ratio of 55:1, although it explains that this figure is frequently lower; the maximum ratio set in Brazil is 40:1, but the report states that this is often exceeded.)

To sum up, all these data can help us to form an idea of which countries have the largest primary school attendance today. Those with the lowest concentration are, as a general rule, developed countries, although there are considerable differences between them, not always in accordance with what might be expected. As a matter of pure curiosity, the following countries are listed which, according to the *Statistical yearbook*, have a ratio lower than 15:1: San Marino (9); Andorra (10); Austria (13); Qatar (13); Israel (14); Luxembourg (14); Byelorussian SSR (15); Cuba (15); Finland (15); Hungary (15); Italy (15).

As in previous cases, these figures can give us a fairly good idea of the amount of teaching staff in the respective primary schools, but they are very unlike those given by the countries themselves in their reports. Austria, for example, says that there is an average of twenty-four pupils per teacher in its primary schools and that the maximum number set is thirty. As can be seen, these

figures differ enormously from the one given above. It is likely that the figure in the report refers only to those teachers who are directly responsible for a particular course or study year and not to other teachers and specialists. The figure given in the Cuban report is closer and fluctuates between seventeen and eighty, although it is very interesting to note the comment that this figure is much too low and should be raised to thirty-five or forty.

Special educational institutions

It is not our intention to give much space here to what in this book can only be given a passing reference, since, while special education institutions in principle may serve as primary schools, they are of much larger scope. In the last few decades, however, there has been an increasingly close connection between this type of institution and the traditional primary schools as a result of the conviction that too much segregation of children suffering from various kinds of handicaps is neither helpful to them, nor to normal children, nor to society as a whole. In many countries, 'integration' programmes have gained ground to the point where many of them are thinking of reserving the traditional special institutions only for the neediest cases.

This is perhaps one matter where we can find the greatest differences between the developed and the developing countries. Special education institutions and programmes in the African continent and in broad areas of Asia, Oceania and America have scarcely begun to get under way, while there are some countries which have made considerable progress. State action has generally been slow, such that present achievements have been largely supported by private initiative — and especially by religious or voluntary associations. In Africa, for example, there is only a small network of schools in a few countries, which, of course, is insufficient. In Kenya, for example, there are forty-eight special schools for different kinds of disadvantaged children and twenty-five special education units in regular schools. Nigeria, the Central African Republic and Senegal are other countries where special education is beginning to make an impression (among other institutions, Senegal has eight schools for socially maladjusted children). But in the majority of the other countries, there are very few such institutions. In Benin there are two — one for the deaf and dumb and the other for socially maladjusted children. In Botswana, there are only three, all of them private. Guinea has one school for the deaf and dumb. Conakry and has taken certain steps so that other disadvantaged children can be cared for in the regular schools. In Madagascar, there are three establishments, two of them private. In Seychelles, there is an important reorientation centre. The list could naturally be longer, but it is obvious that this very small number of institutions is far from being able to cope with the existing needs.

Latin America also suffers from undeniable deficiencies, but most of the countries in this area have been making considerable efforts in recent years. Like other countries, Argentina has concentrated its most important foundations in its largest cities, and especially in Buenos Aires, as, for example, those for the education and treatment of deaf mutes and children who are hard of hearing. Some of its institutions have received well-deserved recognition. In Paraguay, efforts have also been concentrated in the capital, Asunción, where there are eight special schools and a pre-school centre. There are three more schools in other cities, while a small number of special classes (thirty-nine are mentioned in the report) are operating in seventeen different localities. In Nicaragua, there were twenty-six specialized institutes in 1983, but today special classes have been added to the regular schools, especially in Managua. In recent years, Colombia has shown considerable interest in special education schools, largely as a result of the work carried out by the National Education Campaign (CAMINA). Lastly, mention should be made of two schools which are extremely active: the Panamanian Institute for Special Rehabilitation and the David Rose School for Handicapped Children in Guyana.

There has also been important work in some countries in Asia and Oceania. There are about seventy specialized institutions in the Republic of Korea and almost 1,000 special classes connected with the regular schools. In this respect, Japan is one of the most advanced countries in the world: in 1982 there were 877 special education schools in that country, in addition to many classes in the regular schools and special services for identifying children's defects. Mention should also be made of the facilities provided for certain sick or disadvantaged children to receive instruction in their own homes. New Zealand has a perhaps smaller but relatively solid infrastructure and has launched interesting rehabilitation programmes in its schools. Other nations, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka have made important progress in recent times. Malaysia has a certain number of specialized schools as well as appropriate classes in the regular schools; there are legal provisions to regulate the length of primary studies for handicapped children, which, for example, in the case of deaf-mutes must be eight years instead of the normal six. In both Sri Lanka and Indonesia — besides the work done in the specialized schools — interesting experiments are being conducted with a view to integrating handicapped children in regular schools; in Indonesia there is an important group of schools which are equipped with the proper facilities and are known as 'integrated primary schools'. The situation is more unsatisfactory in other nations, such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, etc., but even in those countries there has been growing public awareness of this problem. In Bangladesh, special attention is given to disadvantaged children by various institutions under the Ministry of Social Welfare, as well as by some private ones, such as

the *Furguania Madrasahs* and those sponsored by the Underprivileged Children's Education Programme.

Similar interest has also developed among the Arab countries. Although they obviously do not yet have the necessary institutions, they are encouraging establishment of special schools as well as special classes in the primary schools. This is the case in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, etc. In some countries — Morocco for example — private initiative is still the decisive factor.

All the European and North American countries can be said to have shown a steadily increasing interest in special schools and the resources made available to them [15]. Although the normal practice is still to have specialized schools and additional classes in some regular schools, the principle of 'integration' has been increasingly applied in recent years. The United States has encouraged many experiments, even through federal aid programmes. As a general rule, the countries which have been most successful up to now in applying this principle are, logically enough, those where the primary schools have a most favourable pupil/teacher ratio: this is the case, among others, in Italy (with a ratio of 15:1, one of the lowest in the world), in Norway (which integrated handicapped children into the regular schools as early as 1975), in Sweden, etc.

Unconventional institutions and programmes

What can be said about this type of institution is the opposite to what was said about the preceding ones. They are usually more important — and occasionally more numerous — in developing countries than in countries which have firmly established educational structures. The reason seems to be implicit in the phenomenon itself and has much to do with the frequent dislike of the professional teaching staff — whose influence in the educational structure of the developed countries hardly needs to be emphasized — for institutional formulas with which they are not familiar.

The cause for the existence and importance of this type of institution is of course the presence in society of large numbers of young people and adults who have not attended school and are frequently illiterate. In the ministries of many countries, not to say almost all — developing countries there are usually departmental divisions, sections or branches for non-formal education, adult education, lifelong education, etc., which, regardless of the numbers using them, carry out primary education programmes for adults and young people who have not attended school or who left prematurely. This is the case in countries like Bangladesh, Botswana, China, Guinea, India, Iraq, Jordan, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Uganda and many others. There

also such departments in Europe and North America, although those specifically concerned with primary education are generally less necessary. (However, it must not be forgotten that certain European countries, such as Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey, still have relatively high rates of illiteracy which their respective authorities are still trying to reduce by organizing programmes and campaigns.)

Many of the present unconventional institutions rely on the traditional infrastructure for carrying out their campaigns. This frequently happens in the many accelerated primary education schools which encourage the completion of the primary grades in a shorter time than that provided for by law and which also often combine these studies with periods of work. Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay and the Republic of Korea, among many others, have institutions of this kind (in the Republic of Korea, according to its report, there are four schools of this kind, called 'civic schools'). Many interesting experiments have been carried out not only to make up for the lack of education but to encourage it indirectly by persuading the local communities and parents to understand the usefulness of the primary school and the necessity of sending their children there instead of putting obstacles in their way. In India, considerable efforts are being made in this direction, based in particular on the Programme of Non-formal Education, which was launched at the end of the sixth Five-Year Plan. This programme:

... includes a much greater degree of flexibility in terms of the pupil/teacher *ratio*, teacher qualification, class timetable, quantity of teaching, etc. It was originally conceived to combat in particular the dropping out of girls, who did not have access to regular schools because of other interests and responsibilities. Now non-formal education is confronted with other problems since it has been given an enormous task in connection with the achievement of universal primary education in 1990. It is expected that, of the 64 million additional pupils who will enter primary education, almost 39 million will be educated through this system[16].

Similar progress can be expected in other countries. Bangladesh is also resorting to non-formal education, both for starting primary education campaigns and, above all, to stimulate parents to send their children to school; an important role in this work is being played by the so-called 'Community Learning Centres'. In Indonesia, although the situation there is not comparable with the preceding cases, the practicality of non-formal education is being clearly demonstrated by the *Kejar* Programme, which also depends on the community to identify children and young people who have not gone to school.

Since primary education in the European countries is practically universal — with a few exceptions — any search for alternative or supplementary facilities is considered less important. Nevertheless, programmes of a non-formal nature are being developed in some countries in order to remedy one problem

which causes considerable anxiety: that of appropriate education for children of immigrants, who, for linguistic and sociological reasons, often suffer maladjustment to school life. In Belgium, for example, measures are being taken both to ensure the closer integration of immigrants in general and to improve their children's work in school; with respect to the former, the so-called 'inter-cultural education' teaches immigrants some knowledge of their native language and culture, but at the same time it tries to accustom them to their new surroundings, while for the children it provides additional instruction in the language used in school (French or Flemish). Similar measures are being taken in other countries, such as Denmark, France and the Federal Republic of Germany.

At this point, we should not omit some specific reference to the 'distance education' programmes which many countries are either using or experimenting with at the first level. Correspondence, radio and television are used and it should be added that their influence on primary education is not always direct.

One of these pioneer institutions, which is still in operation, is the New Zealand 'Correspondence School', created in 1925. From that time on, innumerable institutions of the same kind have been established on all five continents, both by private and public initiative. There is still a preference for using the mail and printed matter as the basic means of teaching, although other mass communication media have since been added, especially radio. In Africa, experiments along these lines have been numerous and generally successful. Distance education centres have been established in Algeria, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Nigeria, Uganda, etc. The 'National Correspondence Institute' of Dar-es-Salaam in the United Republic of Tanzania has conducted experiments of acknowledged usefulness. The foundation in 1971 of institutions of this kind in Mauritius, Botswana and Lesotho by the Cambridge International Extension College has proved equally successful. Not all of these centres have undertaken primary education programmes directly, but almost all of them have had considerable influence on primary education, especially by the preference they have always shown for the distance education and advanced training of teachers.

Experience in Latin America has been equally fruitful. Radio schools have flourished in almost all countries, especially as a support for the regular schools and as a means for raising the educational and cultural level of young people and adults who had not gone to school and were scattered throughout rural areas. Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and most of the other nations of the continent have carried out extensive campaigns. Associations such as SEDECOS in Santiago de Chile and ALER in Quito, have encouraged operational and research projects[18]. M

of the institutes of radio education are working with 'a population which either has never had any access to the formal education system, or else has received only one, two or three years of primary education'[19]. Their relationship with the regular schools is not always an easy one.

Most radio education systems (SER) report the presence of few links with primary schools, for example, they either use the teaching materials of SER or supplement their programmes (Acpo, San Gabriel), providing premises or helping with the distribution of materials. In any event, the SER estimate that in general there is an attitude of indifference, even open hostility, on the part of primary school-teachers in different communities[20].

A similar comment could be made concerning many countries in Asia and Oceania which make use of their own resources for distance education. Again, the means most commonly employed is printed matter sent by mail, as well as the radio, although the use of television is gaining favour in such countries as Australia, China, India, Indonesia, New Zealand, etc. It would seem that important steps will be taken in this direction in the not too distant future. A recent document from India views the situation as follows:

India is one of the few countries in the world that possesses its own satellites in space. It has a considerable network of television and radio stations and, at least as far as radio is concerned, there is a great capacity to develop educational programmes. Concerning educational television, a number of centres have already been set up and a few of them have started functioning. The availability of a satellite and a television network that covers most of the population is one of the most significant factors capable of leading to the development of new educational initiatives. Undoubtedly, this technology can revolutionize the teaching/learning system, enrich formal education, and also serve as a support to non-formal education, as well as to distance education systems[21].

We could extend this discussion considerably by referring to other experiments in distance education which are being conducted in the Arab countries, Europe and North America. The countries of Eastern Europe, for example, have long been concerned with this matter, although most of their many correspondence education institutions still have no more than an indirect effect on the primary level. It should be noted that in most cases the use of television has been increasingly restricted: experiments such as that of the Italian *telescuola* have not lasted very long. In Spain, the National Centre for Distance Basic Education (CENEBAE) for the most part uses printed matter, together with some help from the radio. One exception is Portugal, where *telescola* is being much used as a fundamental aid for teaching the upper cycle of basic education called the 'preparatory cycle' aimed at pupils aged 10 to 12.

As unconventional centres and programmes, we could no doubt also mention many other experiments of various kinds (agricultural schools, popular schools, etc.) which are carried out in many places. But at this point it is neither useful nor necessary to refer to such a plethora of projects and activities.

4. ORGANIZATION OF CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES

This section will discuss a few details concerning the length of time allotted for primary education activities; the more fundamental aspects have either already been touched on or will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Attention will be directed primarily at the school calendar, taking into account the length of lessons, as well as vacation periods. Then the school year as an organizational period will be examined and the conclusion will consist in the school day and its hourly schedule.

Examples will be drawn only from those countries which answered the International Questionnaires or presented a national report and provided information on these aspects.

The school year

In reply to the question about the total duration of the school period, the majority of countries referred to the total number of *weeks* spent in teaching activities throughout the year. This reply can be illustrative for all the countries — the majority, as we shall see — which have a five-day school week but can be confusing with regard to those which do not conform to this mode. A school year of, let us say, thirty-five weeks of five days is not the same as another which contains the same thirty-five weeks, but of six days. It seems more appropriate to convert the number of weeks into the number of school days. This also presents a number of disadvantages. The most important is that, in many cases, the corresponding number of days turns out to be greater than is actually the case, since no account has been taken of the occasional holidays scattered throughout the year. Generally speaking, the reports do not supply this detail, which is understandable since these holidays may be variable. The other important disadvantage of measuring the dimensions of the school year in terms of school days lies in considering days to be identical between countries, although they frequently vary with respect to the number of hours taught. However, since these other details will also be referred to in some way farther on, counting the total of school days seemed to be the best method, in spite of its deficiencies.

Most education systems have established a period of school attendance which varies between 180 and 200 days per year. In absolute terms, out of seventy countries which gave clear replies to this question, forty-one fall within the average mentioned above while nineteen are above the figure of 200 days and ten below that of 180. In any case, it must also be borne in mind that there is still a considerable variation even between the two limits of the average.

For the time being, let us concentrate on the higher figures. In Western Europe, the countries concerned are Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg; and in Eastern Europe, the German Democratic Republic, the Ukrainian SSR, the USSR and Czechoslovakia; except for the latter, all of them have in common a school week lasting six days. In the African continent, three of them (Burundi, Rwanda and Senegal) are in this higher bracket, but only one of them (Rwanda) has a six-day school week. There is no Latin American nation in this category. On the other hand, more than half of those included from Asia and Oceania exceed 200 school days per year: they are China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal and the Republic of Korea, and once more we find that all of them except one (Malaysia) teach for six days of the week. Lastly, the same thing is true of the three Arab States (Iraq, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic). It is possible to conclude that, out of the nineteen countries which provide for a school year of more than 200 school days, fifteen have considered it most appropriate to associate this with a long school week.

Now, turning to the countries which accept a school year of less than 180 days, there are four in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Spain and Turkey). Belgium is very close to 180 and is unusual in that its calculation is not based on school weeks or days but on half-days, of which there must be 320 for the whole year. France and Spain share the same figure of thirty-five school weeks or 175 days. Turkey is one of the countries with a shorter school year: thirty-one weeks or 155 days for rural schools. (Urban schools add a few days more, up to 170: this country's report does not explain the reason for this distinction.) As far as Eastern Europe is concerned, only Bulgaria falls into this category, providing for thirty-three weeks or 165 days. In Africa, the lowest figure is that for the Central African Republic, with only 150 school days per year; Gabon and Zambia should also be included here, with 165 days each. In Latin America, Nicaragua and Paraguay state that they are under the 180 figure, although it is not clear whether, unlike the other countries in their area and many others throughout the world, holidays occurring during the year have already been deducted. This list does not include any country in Asia and Oceania or in the Arab States. It should be added that all those included here have a five-day school week.

We do not think it necessary to present in detail the forty-one countries which have an average school year of 180 to 200 days; we shall merely say that those at the upper end of the scale are Bangladesh, Cuba, Denmark, Malawi, Mauritius, Sweden and Thailand, while the lower end includes Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica, Netherlands, Panama, Venezuela and the United States of America. The remaining countries show average figures which are more or less close to 190 school days per year[22]. As for the countries which are not

included in any of these comparisons, their answers were presented in such a way as to not permit the calculation of the number of days.

The dates for beginning and ending the school year, as well as the vacation periods, are largely dependent on the climatic conditions, the habits and the religious traditions in the various parts of the world. In general, the most widespread model is that of European origin, which makes the summer season a broad borderline between one school year and the next, and which at the same time constitutes the principal vacation period.

In Europe, in fact, the school year in most countries begins in the month of September and often ends in June. Nevertheless, there are certain variations. The Scandinavian countries — Denmark, Finland and Sweden — as well as the Netherlands, generally prefer to begin towards the middle of August, while some German *Länder* adopt the same practice. (In the Federal Republic of Germany there is no compulsory date for beginning and ending the school year, but it is recommended that *Länder* stagger these dates in order to ensure a more rational distribution of vacations.) There seems to be less agreement among these countries about the closing dates; in Finland it can be as early as 31 May, but Sweden and Denmark make it well into June and the Netherlands not until the first day of July (thus becoming one of the countries with the longest school year, although this does not mean, as already noted, that it has the largest number of school days). The other European countries, like those in North America, choose to begin in September, some early in the month (Belgium, United States, etc.) and others towards the middle (France, Spain, Luxembourg, etc.). There are very few (Portugal, San Marino) which delay the beginning until the first days of October. June is ordinarily the most popular month for ending the school year; Turkey, which has ruled that teaching activity should begin early in September, provides that it should end very early in rural areas, in the middle of May, but that it shall last somewhat longer in urban areas.

As far as vacations are concerned, most European countries follow very similar rules, reserving the summer months for the longest break, a period which is extended up to almost three months in the Mediterranean countries but which is considerably shorter in Scandinavia. Two equally traditional vacation periods usually occur during the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter (with ten or fifteen days of vacation), in addition to which there are sometimes another week in October and in February (connected with carnival celebrations). With some readjustments (generally connected with the non-observance of religious holidays), this is also the prevailing practice in the countries of Eastern Europe; in the USSR, for example, the school year begins — with much celebration, to be sure — on 1 September and ends on 1 May.

In Africa, two kinds of school calendars are used. The first of them, which is the most common, has some features which are fairly similar to the European type, although the beginning of school activities is frequently postponed until the first days of October (this is the case in Benin, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Senegal, etc.). A few countries begin in the preceding month (Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda). The closing date is July or June, according to cases, with minor variations. As for vacations, this group of countries also adheres to the tradition of holding the longest ones in July, August or September, although some shorten them (Guinea and Malawi, for example, hold them only in July and August). In Nigeria, it is only required that the total period of annual vacations should vary between twelve and fifteen weeks, but it is left to each state to determine the exact dates. With some exceptions, it also observes the custom of short vacations in the Christmas/New Year period and again at Easter, although there are some variations. In the Central African Republic, for example, there are usually two weeks in February and only a few days at Easter.

But, as noted, the calendar observed by another group of countries is different, the school year beginning in January or February and ending in November or December. This category must include, among other countries, Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia: these names suggest that the main reasons for adopting this calendar are based on the local climate, although this does not apply in all cases. (Malawi, as we have seen, has preferred to adopt the preceding system.) In this group, the vacation periods are usually distributed more proportionately, the longest almost always being the months of December and January. Let us take, as fairly typical, the case of Kenya: this country, which divides the school year into three 'quarters', allows a one-month vacation at the end of each quarter, during April, August and December.

In Latin America, the adoption of one system or the other is primarily but not exclusively due to climatic reasons. Most countries would seem to prefer to follow the natural seasons of the year, although they customarily delay the beginning of the school year until March or even April (only a few do so in February): the closing month is generally November or December. With some slight variations, these are the systems followed, among others, by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru. (By no means can they be said to share the same geographic and climatic conditions.) Colombia is one case where there are two calendars, one of which — designed for the country's central and northern areas — is in accord with those we have just mentioned, while the other observes the traditional European system (September-June), which is also observed by the second group of Latin American countries. In the case of Colombia, the latter is the prevailing one for the south-western terri-

tory. Besides Colombia, the countries which prefer to begin in September include, among others, Bahamas, Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico and Venezuela. As far as both groups are concerned, the most important distinguishing factor is the timing of the longest vacations (generally, in summer) which in the case of the first group are usually concentrated in the first two months of the year, within certain limits, while the second group generally holds them in July and August. But there are no important differences about the other vacation periods which, with only some exceptions, allot one or two weeks to Easter. (The countries in the first group also generally provide two or three weeks of vacation in June, July or August.) In Cuba, besides the long July and August vacations, the programme provides for one week of 'recreational activities' after every ten regular school weeks.

In Asia and Oceania, the school calendars are usually aligned with the calendar year, although there are considerable variations in the dates chosen for beginning school activities. In Malaysia, for example, they usually begin in January; in Nepal, in the middle of that month (except in the coldest part of the country, where they begin in February). New Zealand begins the school year in February; the Republic of Korea and Pakistan in March; and Japan in April. (In Japan, to be sure, there is a growing opinion that the present calendar should be changed so that school starts in September.) China and Viet Nam are among the few countries where the school year begins in September. In this respect, the most original country is undoubtedly Indonesia, which begins the school year in July.

With regard to vacation periods, the countries of Asia and Oceania present the widest range of differences, although for the most part the longest periods are set during the hottest months. Just a few examples will suffice: Malaysia allots seven weeks of vacation in November and December; New Zealand, six weeks in December and January; Thailand, six weeks in April and May; the Islamic Republic of Iran and Viet Nam, three months in June, July and August. Other vacation periods frequently depend on customs and traditions (occasionally of a religious nature), as well as on climatic conditions.

As far as the Arab States are concerned, there is fairly unanimous agreement among them about the school calendar: it usually begins in September and ends in June (in the Syrian Arab Republic it ends somewhat earlier, generally in May). The long vacations are generally held in the three summer months, though there are others which divide up the whole school year (as in Iraq and Jordan) or the quarters in which the year itself is divided (as in Morocco). In Tunisia, aside from the three summer months, there are vacations of one week in November, two in January and one more in April.

The school week

The five-day school week has become customary almost everywhere in the world. Consequently, we shall refer here only to the exceptions, which in certain areas, however, are not as rare as might be supposed.

There are no exceptions in North America (although it would doubtless be possible to find some schools with a different schedule). In Europe, the greatest exceptions in the Western countries are found in Cyprus, the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg, and in the Eastern countries in the Byelorussian SSR, the German Democratic Republic, the Ukrainian SSR, the USSR and Yugoslavia. (It is appropriate to recall that only those countries which answered the ICE Questionnaire are included.) It should be pointed out that, although for the most part the Netherlands uses the five-day week, it also has many schools which prefer six days. And while Yugoslavia also prefers six days, it contains areas where the five-day week has become the general rule. In Africa, only two countries state that they have a six-day school week: Guinea and Rwanda. No Latin American country allows six days (only Chile seems to have admitted the possibility of doing so). In Asia, on the other hand, those which prefer this longer week cannot be considered exceptions, since it is recognized in China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Nepal and the Republic of Korea. A majority of the Arab States also seem to have opted for the six-day week, such as Iraq, Jordan, Qatar and the Syrian Arab Republic, to which we must add Algeria, based in part on its report. Consequently, one fourth of the countries questioned by the IBE have a six-day school week.

In most of the countries with a five-day week, the non-school days are Saturdays and Sundays, except in the case of countries which are wholly or predominantly Islamic, which occasionally (but not always) observe Fridays and Saturdays as non-school days. In a few nations — Malaysia, for example — there are some states which follow the first system and some the second. France, together with some other nations influenced by it, like Senegal, consider Wednesday (as well as Sunday) a non-school day, originally for the purpose of allowing one day of religious instruction per week outside the school. In countries where Saturday is considered a school day, it is usual to attend school only in the morning and leave the afternoon free. But in some places, there are other half-days without school (generally afternoons), as, for example, in Luxembourg, which has a six-day school week, but leaves Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons free, while in Guinea the free afternoons are Thursday and Saturday.

It is hard to make any precise evaluation of the actual schedule of school work in each week in different countries. The main difficulty is that many countries do not explain what they understand as school hours. We read in their reports,

for example, that teaching activity comprises 25 hours per week, but it is not specified whether this total period includes or excludes rest periods, refreshments, recreation, etc. Some countries' reports are considerably clearer and refer in particular to the number of *periods* or *classes* per week (and/or per day) and to their actual duration, which usually varies between thirty and sixty minutes. Since it may be assumed that the system of using periods of less than one hour is fairly widespread, it is almost impossible, in the case of countries which do not clarify this point, to determine even the approximate volume of work actually done in school.

In spite of this, it is possible to make certain deductions. One of them shows us the wide variety of ideas with which some countries approach the subject of the school timetable. In Argentina, for example, there are 'full-day' primary schools which teach for 8 hours per day (40 per week), and 'short-day' schools which teach for only 5 hours (25 per week). In San Marino, there is a similar difference between the 'full-timetable' establishments (8 hours per day) and the 'part-timetable' schools (4 hours). In Madagascar, a school which is open 27½ hours per week is considered to have a 'normal timetable', while a school with a 'reduced timetable' teaches for only 15 hours per week.

It should be added that quite frequently the private schools of many countries have a weekly timetable which is longer than that of the public ones. This is expressly stated in some reports, for example Indonesia associates it with Islamic schools. All this goes to show that the actual educational work done in primary schools is not 100 per cent comparable, even within one and the same country; almost everywhere there are underlying ideas which may perhaps be invisible to the reader but reflected in some special way in these timetables (and not only in them alone). Nor is it true that even if timetables appear to be completely uniform, this constitutes sufficient proof that they are identical.

Nevertheless, the variations between timetables are much more obvious between some countries and others. They cover a wide range — between 15 and 36 hours of school work per week, speaking always in average terms (and rejecting any extreme solutions which are sometimes applied for the youngest or the oldest children). In Viet Nam, for example, pupils go to primary school for only three hours a day (15 per week), while in Guinea they study for 24 hours per week and in Indonesia for 36 (although this country's report explains that this number is considerably lower in the case of pupils in the first two school years).

Since it does not seem necessary to go into too many details, we can say that most of the countries in the world share a similar weekly timetable for primary instruction which varies between 20 and 30 hours. Within these margins, there are no excessive regional variations. It can also be assumed that the idea of t

graduated timetable is fairly widespread, namely, the application of gradually longer timetables with the increasing age of the pupils.

Let us take just a few examples: in Denmark, pupils of school year I go through 18 periods of school work per week, while those in school year VII do 30; in Finland, there are 21 hours (or periods) per week for years I and II, 25 hours for years III and IV and 26 hours for years V and VI; in the Federal Republic of Germany, there is a timetable variation of 8 hours between years I and IV (20 and 28 respectively); in Malawi and Zambia, variations between lower and higher courses are from $17\frac{1}{2}$ hours to $27\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week; in Cuba, 22 to 25 periods; in the Republic of Korea, 1 or 2 hours per week are added as the pupil advances from one year to another, so that the total weekly figures vary between 23 and 33; in Japan, in general (it is not strictly regulated), they start from 25 hours and increase to 29 or 30; in Tunisia, variations are between 20 and 27 hours per week.

In addition, it should be noted that in many cases the variations not only affect the daily and weekly number of classes or periods for pupils of one age or another, but also the exact duration of these classes. Thus in Bulgaria, for example, the duration of each period or class is 35 minutes for the youngest pupils, subsequently increasing to 40 minutes; something similar is also true in the USSR, Yugoslavia, etc. Likewise in Africa, Kenyan pupils of the three lower courses (lower primary) study for 40 periods per week of 30 minutes each, while those in the upper primary (also three courses) have 45 classes of 35 minutes each. In China, the duration allotted for periods varies, according to age, between 30 and 35 minutes. And the procedure is similar in many other countries which need not be mentioned in detail, although it should be said that there are a few countries where the system of gradation is not applied. Perhaps one of the most striking examples in this respect is Spain which makes no change whatsoever in its weekly timetable of 25 hours throughout the whole eight years of its basic general education.

The school day

The school day is not only defined by the number of hours per day that a child spends in school, but by the distribution of these hours throughout the day. As is only logical, the six-day week generally permits a shorter number of hours than the five-day week. But it also opens other opportunities which are no less important in certain respects, such as, for example, the fact that the school can dispense with the school cafeteria or special restrooms for children during the longest intervals between classes. The five-day week is almost by its very nature aimed at a five- or six-hour schedule, which can involve responsibility for extra activities, such as lunches, for example, but on the other hand has the

advantage of leaving the pupils — and their parents — a longer week-period. It can be said that in recent decades this system has been adopted in most countries, but they have applied it in different ways with regard to organization of the school day.

In certain cases, the fact that the school could provide a lunch for underprivileged pupils seemed to be much more of an advantage than a disadvantage, as well as an important way to win over the pupils' parents. In other cases, the diet and eating habits of the country in question did not call for the construction of commodious canteens and cafeterias but merely simple lunch counters where pupils could be given some beverage or hot food, since the main meal of the day would be eaten at home after school with their parents. In rural areas, in particular, it was also possible to interrupt the school day at noon and leave pupils free to go home and lunch there. All these solutions have been, and still are being, tried in various countries, so that today we find a considerable variety.

It has been quite frequently said that the success of the five-day school week has been greatly influenced by the increased employment of women, i.e. by the fact that many mothers are not at home a good part of the day and therefore prefer to keep their children in school while they are at work. This, in fact, leads to a conception of the school — and the primary school in particular — as a 'day school', a conception which is undoubtedly quite widespread. It does not, however, correspond to the facts in all cases. For example, we only have to remember that those countries where the employment of women outside the home is most widespread — as may be the case in the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the USSR — retain the six-day school week and that, on the contrary, countries where the mother is always at home observe the five-day week, with the day frequently consisting of both morning and afternoon sessions. In the three countries just mentioned, the mother's absences from home in order to work have been compensated in another way, without necessarily resorting to the school. In the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, there has been a considerable expansion of an institution specializing in supplementary educational activities: the *Kinderhorte*. In the USSR and other Eastern European countries, the same purposes are served, when necessary, by the 'pioneer palaces' and similar establishments.

On the other hand, we should remember that in France the school timetable is far from being distributed in the same way as that of the working week, although this does not prevent its retention. It is also retained in Italy, with the assistance of the so-called *doposcuola*, although experiments with full-time (*tempo pieno*) schools have enabled some pupils to attend school both mornings and afternoons.

Summing up the present situation in countries with reference to the school day, it can be seen that there are three different but relatively uniform groups. The first consists of those countries which prefer a more or less lengthy half day (generally not more than five and a half hours), usually in the mornings and beginning every day at an early hour (8 or 8.30 a.m.); this schedule, as it is unnecessary to repeat, is followed by many of the countries which have adopted the six-day week; some of them combine it with the possibility of providing double shifts in the same schools, one in the morning and another in the afternoon (a system which has been fairly usual in some countries in Eastern Europe, China, etc., as well as elsewhere — Brazil and Nicaragua, for example — which have a five-day working week).

The second group comprises countries which ordinarily have a five-day school week but prefer to adopt a full-day schedule, interrupted only by an interval of an hour, or an hour-and-a-half at the most, when a light lunch is frequently provided: this is the case in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and a large group of countries in all continents.

The last group contains those countries which divide the school day into two distinctly separate half days, with the possibility for the pupils to go home for lunch, although lunch is frequently served or can be served in the school. Among many other examples, typical cases are Senegal (with a normal schedule of 8:00 to 12:00 and from 15:00 to 17:00); Uganda (with a schedule from 8:00 to 12:30 and from 2:30 to 4:30); and Spain (whose public schools normally function between 10:00 and 13:00 and between 15:00 and 17:00). In all these cases, of course, we have referred to the most widespread timetables regulated by law and not to special situations, which no doubt also frequently occur.

5. PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

One of the most striking features of school organization in recent decades, especially with regard to primary education, is the growing participation of the local community in school affairs, and even in managing its own school. Not that this participation has already become regular practice in most countries, nor that it has taken on any specific traits of a theoretical and practical nature. On the contrary, the problems still involved in associating the school with the surrounding community are more than obvious everywhere. It is also evident that there are persistent opinions and forces which work against this particular idea. However, it is a fact that for half a century there has been an uninterrupted increase in the efforts made in countries of very different characteristics to give greater responsibility to the community in questions affecting the

primary school. This has obviously been influenced by the desire to democratize the educational structure, as well as — or even more so — other social structures. But other important and weighty reasons — of a socio-economic, cultural, etc., character — have also been present, at least to the same extent.

It should be clear that this subject is of interest at this point because of its organizational implications and that, consequently, it will be considered only as a side issue. Nevertheless, in the interests of clarity it is necessary to point out the three phases through which primary schools have passed — phases whose gradual appearance has nowhere led to the extinction of the previous ones. The first and most traditional of these phases is that which might be called 'the school as an institution for training and learning'. The second could be called 'the school as community'. And the third one, the most modern one at the present time (although with some earlier precedents), should be described as 'the school of the community'.

There are doubtless three phases in the homogeneous development of a school, but the fact that all three persist with equal force requires us to exercise caution and not to consider the first two as obsolete or merely residual. On the contrary, there is no lack of evidence which would confirm in this case the existence of a kind of historical circle and the consequent rebirth of what was one time the first phase. In any case, what we have to realize here is that the three phases or styles of school comprise distinctly different organizational styles. The first represents the traditional organization of a school which was presided over and administered in its slightest details by the teaching faculty, either in their own name or more frequently in the name of their founders and/or financial body, whether the State or the local authority, the religious authorities, some private association, etc.

The 'school as community', whose theoretical bases and successful accomplishments were so much assisted by the New Education movement, made the encouragement of participative, responsible and democratic citizens the keynote of its educational work and opened the way for a type of organization which rested equally on the shoulders of all members of the educational community, both teachers and pupils. Both in the first and the second phase the educational institution was conceived as a unity in itself, complete and self-sufficient, at least from the organizational point of view. The expression 'educational autonomy' was frequently used to protect the school from organizational innovations from outside.

On the contrary, what characterizes the third phase or style is the belief that the school is a part of a larger community, on which it is really dependent and to which it fundamentally owes its services. It is not the mission of the school to take the pupil out of his milieu, and imbue him with certain aspirations and

habits encouraging him to leave his own community (which will be all the poorer for his absence), but on the contrary to prepare him to do useful work for his society and in this way to ensure a full and happy life for himself and others. Accordingly, the organization of the school is, in this last case, a task which affects and places obligations on the community as a whole: its authorities, parents, teachers and pupils.

A brief review of different countries shows us that, for the most part, the really important organizational style of the primary schools continues to follow that of 'schools as an institution of teaching and learning', with some, generally hesitant, influence on the part of the second phase model or something resembling it, with some occasional forms of student participation. This second model has also found a certain following, although generally small and almost always in establishments financed by private initiative. Nevertheless, the introduction of plans of general, fundamental or basic education in many countries has frequently been accompanied by efforts for greater participation by the pupils in the life of the community. The assumption by the school of tasks previously unknown to it — sports, artistic activities, cafeterias, libraries, etc. — has encouraged greater participation, including that of public schools. And this has gradually opened the way to some forms resembling those of the schools of the third phase, and to the 'community school'. As already noted, since the organizational styles derived from the first two phases are to be found in all countries, it is not worthwhile to refer to them at any greater length. On the other hand, we should consider some specific experiments conducted in recent years aimed at establishing much stronger and more responsible links between the school and its community.

In the first place, let us draw attention to the impulse which has been given to different forms of collaboration on the part of parents in the life and the administration of the schools. The United States, for example, has been extremely active in this respect for a long time. In the United Kingdom, the Taylor Report of 1977 recommended that special attention be paid to this matter and suggested that one fourth of the total members of school boards should be representatives of parents. In any case, this report strongly emphasized 'a need for each school to have its own governing body to ensure that the school was run with as full an awareness as possible of the wishes and feelings of the parents and the local community'[23].

A few years later, the Act of 1980 had already established the rule that one or two representatives of parents should be members of these governing boards, thus providing a legal framework for a system which was already in practice. In France, provision has also been made for the participation of parents in the *conseil d'école*, as well as for that of the mayor or other representatives of the local community. In Spain, legislation prior to the 1985 Act concerning the

Right to Education had already made it compulsory for a certain number of parents to participate in what was then called the school 'governing board' (*consejo de dirección*); this principle has been confirmed and the 'school board' (its new name) is still composed of teachers, parents and representatives of the local authority, as well as some pupils from the upper classes. There are bodies in many other countries, possessing more or less decision-making powers which ensure the participation of parents and other community authorities. At the level of each school (but generally not at the provincial or national level) there are also some forms of parent participation in Eastern European countries (Hungary, for example), although it is preferred that parents should engage in a well-informed collaboration from outside. In Poland, for example, the so-called 'parent universities' have had considerable success, where parents are instructed in the notions of teaching, psychology, sociology, etc.

On the other hand, there is an increase in the associative movement among parents, either among themselves ('parent associations') or together with teachers ('parent/teacher associations'); the latter are especially widespread in English-speaking countries. Some of these associations have encouraged and are conducting interesting experiments in practical collaboration: in this connection, mention should be made of the so-called *SD Panong* of Indonesian schools which are organized specifically on the basis of this collaboration between parents and teachers and which are especially concerned about the practical needs of their own community.

It is obviously the countries with a predominantly rural population that have placed most emphasis on the need to establish close links between the community and the school, so that the latter will really serve as an instrument for the economic, social and cultural advancement of all the inhabitants and not only or primarily as the springboard for the most able pupils towards higher forms of education. It is consequently in these countries that the most interesting experiments with the *community school* have been carried out.

One example which has become a classic because of its influence both within and outside its own borders is that of the United Republic of Tanzania. This country not only had a predominantly rural population, but one which was widely scattered in small villages which lacked the most elementary services. In these circumstances, any plan for economic and social development was simply impracticable. In order to remedy the situation, from 1967 onwards a programme was set up for creating larger villages which could serve as a base for fundamental services and as units for integrated development; this gave rise to the communities known as *ujamaa*, which were created by a voluntary combination of several villages and which the government provided with certain fundamental services, including a primary school. From the very beginning it was thought that this school should be a starting-place for com

munity development. On this basis, a few experiments were tried out, one of which, promoted at the beginning of the 1970s with the assistance of UNICEF and Unesco in an *ujamaa* called Kwamsisi, achieved special importance. The Kwamsisi Community Education Centre has been able to develop a programme which, while having certain features in common with the country's regular schools, incorporated activities and lessons directly related to the present and the future of the community. From the organizational point of view, its innovations were outstanding, as was also the participation of the local authorities.

As for the school itself, there is a perceptible change which is refreshing and attractive. The timetable is no longer regarded as inviolate, but rather as a general guide. Much more important in the allocation of time and duties are the decisions of the Self-Help Committee comprising fourteen children, the headteacher, a teacher and two members of the Village Council. For example, it is they who decided to plant soya beans in three experimental plots, who decide which pupils should go on short study trips with villagers, and so on[24].

These and other similar experiments have succeeded in creating a climate of collaboration between the population and the school which in other times had seemed doubtful. Likewise, in the United Republic of Tanzania today, many parents offer their assistance, even building the school with materials provided by the government.

Something similar is taking place in Rwanda: in its report to the ICE we read that 'it should be pointed out that the pupils' parents assist in building the schools and in constructing miscellaneous school furniture'[25]. In Burundi, Senegal, Uganda and other countries, the movement of parents and teachers is succeeding in combining its efforts and overcoming traditional opposition. In Ethiopia today many basic education schools have active support from farmers' associations as the result of a campaign which lasted a considerable number of years and required much effort. The same thing could be said of countries in other continents. In Bangladesh, for example, the community learning centres are doing splendid work with parents, with a view to making them more responsible for their children's education.

However, the spirit behind this kind of experiment is not only visible and applicable in developing countries. Although they doubtless possess different characteristics, many rural centres in more affluent countries are complaining about the scanty assistance which their primary schools are giving to the development and even to the survival of their own community, inasmuch as they do no more than inspire their pupils with the desire to leave. The mountain villages of Switzerland, for example, are experiencing this situation. In the next few years, therefore, we can expect a re-establishment of the already accepted idea of *school concentration*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The total number of countries covered by both tables is eighty-five. The additions are certain systems which permit variants. In the case of entrance age, we have entered China twice, which, depending on areas, provides for entrance at ages 6 or 7. In the case of school leaving age, we again refer to China (ages 11 and 13), as well as Cameroon (ages 12 and 13), the United States (ages 12 and 14), and the United Kingdom (age 11 in England and Wales and age 12 in Scotland).
2. Ireland. Q1, p. 2.
3. Turkey. Q1, p. 1.
4. Führ, C. *Education and teaching in the Federal Republic of Germany: a survey*. Bonn-Bad Godesberg, Inter Nationes, 1979, p. 45.
5. Mialaret, G. *World survey of pre-school education*. Paris, Unesco, 1976. 67p. (Education studies and documents, no. 19)
6. Cf. Kenyatta, J. *Facing Mount Kenya: the tribal life of the Gikuyu*. London, 1938, especially p. 95-97.
7. Mialaret, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 60.
8. Morocco. Q1, p. 1.
9. Colombia. Q1, p. 7.
10. This was asked specifically in question no. 1 of the ICE Questionnaire.
11. King, E.J. *Other schools and ours: comparative studies for today*. 5th ed. London, H. K. Rinehart & Winston, 1979, p. 310.
12. In Indonesia, the so-called *SD Kecil* is an incomplete school with three classrooms, in each of which one teacher teaches two grades. These are common in thinly populated areas.
13. Iran. Q1, p. 3.
14. Fitouri, C. *Biculturalisme, bilinguisme et éducation*. Neuchâtel, Switzerland, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1983, p. 157.
15. We should point out the tendency in some European countries not to speak of 'handicapped children'. In Yugoslavia, for example, it is strictly forbidden to use this expression preferring instead 'children with difficulties in development'. See Yugoslavia. Q1, p. 29.
16. India. Ministry of Education. *Challenge of education: a policy perspective*. New Delhi, 1985, p. 39-40.
17. Since 1973, there has been an African Association for Education by Correspondence whose members include most of the schools working in this field.
18. See Osorio Meléndez, H., ed. *Teleducación y cambio social en Latinoamérica*. Santiago de Chile. Proyecto Latinoamericano de Teleducación, Instituto de Solidaridad Internacional de la Fundación Konrad Adenauer, 1976. 286 p.; Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica. *Análisis de los sistemas de educación radiofónica*. Quito, Secretaría Ejecutiva de ALER, 1982. 376 p.; White, R. *An alternative pattern of basic education: Radha Santa Maria*. Paris, Unesco, 1976. 122 p. (IBE. Experiments and innovations in education, no. 30)
19. Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica. *Op. cit.*, p. 38.
20. India. Ministry of Education. *Op. cit.*, p. 77.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
22. In order to complete our account of the countries which answered the Questionnaire, the remaining ones are as follows: Bahamas, Benin, Botswana, Chile, Ethiopia, Finland, Guyana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, San Marino, Seychelles, Uganda, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.

23. Fenwick, K.; McBride, P. *The government of education in Britain*. Oxford, United Kingdom, Martin Robertson, 1981, p.211.
24. Unesco-Unicef Co-operative Programme. *Basic services for children: a continuing search for learning priorities. Part I*. Paris, Unesco, 1978, p.85. (IBE. Experiments and innovations in education, no.36)
25. Rwanda. Q1, p. 1.

CHAPTER III

The curriculum

1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives assigned to primary education, as a specific level of education, always stand in a natural relationship with those assigned to education in general. Hence, any adequate study of the former should perhaps begin with some consideration of the latter, because it is almost always the latter which the last analysis serves as a structure and justification for the former. Nevertheless, let it be clear that the following pages will deal firstly with the primary level. The main reason is that, although it is important to present a clear picture of curricula, we are not prepared to devote more space to them than is strictly necessary. And since Robert Cowen dealt with the matter very competently in Volume XXXIV of this *Yearbook*, it will perhaps not be necessary to go into it again[1]. It will also be helpful for the reader to take a look at the 1985 *Yearbook* (Volume XXXVI) written by Wolfgang Mieter[2].

In the following pages the reader should not only find an overall view of what countries consider to be the main objectives of primary education, but also a differentiated view according to geographic areas. One must not lose sight of how the subject relates to the general context. As we shall see, it happens fairly often that countries existing in very different cultural and socio-economic contexts set goals for themselves which are practically identical — a point to be emphasized. Nevertheless, isomorphisms of expression and even of aspirations should not conceal or overshadow the fact that these objectives are aimed at certain specific activities which are inseparable from the highly different contexts in which they have to function.

Before going into this subject in full, the following discussion will concentrate on the educational or pedagogical objectives of primary education and not on the long-term or short-term objectives pursued by this sector, as, for example, the standardization of the school year, the construction of school buildings, the creation or expansion of certain non-formal educational programmes, etc. The country reports which we are again using as a basis almost always distinguish

between both things, but at times they omit any precise reference to one of them and, what is more pertinent, to the matters we are now concerned with.

Africa

Let us begin by referring specifically to certain countries whose reports say very little about this question, but limit themselves to general statements. Thus, Gabon's report repeats Article 10 of the Gabonese law of 1966 respecting the general organization of education, in which it states that 'the elementary primary schools shall guarantee the basic education provided for all children'[3]. Something similar is found in Ethiopia's report: 'The education imparted at this level is general and preparatory for the next level'[4]. Senegal's report refers to Article 1 of the Decree of 1979 concerning the organization of primary education[5]. That of Seychelles limits itself to explaining that its primary education programme emphasizes the development of basic skills (reading, writing, mathematics)[6]. The information supplied by Togo is still more general; it states that in the long run the objective of all education is to make a 'contribution to the development of the background'[7]. Lastly, the report of Mozambique merely states that, in spite of the experience gained during the national liberation movement, primary education is still 'theoretical and bookish'; it emphasizes that the subject 'religion and morality' has been replaced by 'political education', and concludes by explaining that 'generally speaking, [primary education] is a kind of education intended to provide primary basic training but failing to teach pupils "how to do things".' As we can see, this is therefore a matter of expressing a critical view of the present state of objectives and activities[8].

Quite a few countries wished to emphasize that primary education should be set objectives of a practical nature, and more specifically training for productive work, but naturally without abandoning other goals concerning general education.

- In Benin, 'basic education aims at training a type of citizen who is in contact with practical life and his environment, politically aware of his country's problems and technically competent. This education can enable a Beninese, at the end of the cycle, to get a job and enter active life'[9].
- In Congo, 'the purpose of primary education is to teach the child reading, writing and basic mathematics, to introduce him to the study of nature and the social sciences, productive work, physical and aesthetic education and his duties as a citizen. The objectives are to make him acquire skills, knowledge, the values which will enable him to continue his compulsory education and inspire him with the determination to work for development'[10].
- In Rwanda, 'the objectives pursued by primary education are the following: to make the primary pupils productive, to enable all children to become basically and functionally

literate, to integrate pupils leaving the primary level in their environment and in the process of national development'[11].

- In Uganda 'it is essentially a Basic Education incorporating Literacy, Numeracy and Pre-Vocational Skills. It is a need-based education aimed at producing pupils who can be productive in society. At the same time it prepares the learner for further education'[12].
- In Zimbabwe '[primary education] imparts the 3 Rs and aims to prepare the clientele for life since not all primary school leavers go for secondary education. The concept of education with production is an endeavour to prepare the pupils for the world of work'[13].

A similar idea of practicality is to be found in the following citations, although the explicit references made to the *rural environment* and its specific problems more than justify the reservation of a special place for this group of countries.

- In Burundi, the following are the 'objectives assigned to primary education: to facilitate the transmission and assimilation of knowledge through the mother tongue (Kirundi); to encourage the pupils' integration in their surroundings and their participation in the country's development; to strengthen the culture of Burundi and make it more dynamic'[14].
- The report from the United Republic of Tanzania is one of the most detailed in this respect. Specifically, it lists the following objectives: 'Foster the social goals of living together and working together for the common good; to give pupils a permanent ability to read and write; to impart the socialist values, attitudes and knowledge which will enable pupils to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of their society; to help the pupils to develop an enquiring mind and ability to think and solve problems independently and to provide pupils with an education which is complete in itself, inculcating a sense of commitment to the total community and to help the pupils to accept the values appropriate to the Tanzanians' future'[15].
- Malawi's report, on the contrary, gives us no more than a partial view of the objectives pursued by it. Specifically, it says that 'Some subjects included in the Primary School curriculum are aimed at providing pupils with relevant skills to enable them to earn their living in the rural setting e.g. agriculture, sewing, woodwork and metalwork subjects'[16].
- The statement given by Cameroon is very succinct but quite expressive: 'This education is aimed at awakening the child's mind to the realities of the entire rural world, teaching him to speak, read and count'[17].

The following group of countries offers a picture of the objectives of primary education which we might consider to be of a more traditional kind, bringing out all its fundamental aspects but going into detail about only those more common in any one circumstance or country. On some occasions, this involves a definition of objectives which would be equally valid in very different societies.

- According to Botswana's report, 'The task of primary school is to provide a stimulating environment in which children can grow and develop their capacities as individuals and members of the family and community. Primary education should provide the foundation of basic competencies that will prepare the child for continued in-school and out-of-school

learning and for social and economic life in a modernizing society. Botswana primary schools should aim at making children literate, first in Setswana and then in English, and at providing a basic command of mathematics and knowledge of science and social studies. The syllabus and curriculum will orient children toward the realities of life in Botswana and prepare them for life in the physical and social environment they will experience after they leave school[18]

- In Kenya, 'Primary education is geared towards making the learners literate in basic skills like numeracy, reading and writing. These skills are taught in depth progressively during the length of the primary cycle. Apart from the literacy goal, primary education is aimed at preparing children and young adults for future academic and then career opportunities'[19].
- In Mauritius primary education means 'to prepare the child for self-education and to produce various types and levels of skills required for the socio-economic and cultural development of the country'[20].
- Nigeria's report lists the objectives as 'to inculcate in the children permanent literacy and numeracy; effective communication; the study of science; the study of social norms and values of their local community and of the country as a whole through civics and social studies. The giving of health and physical education, moral and religious education, the encouragement of aesthetics, creative and musical activities, the teaching of local craft and domestic science and agriculture to the children at this age, as well as the development of manipulative skills are also to receive proper attention at this level of education. The ultimate goal of this level of education is the provision of basic tools for further educational advancement and preparation for trades and crafts in the locality'[21].
- The report of the Central African Republic makes a clear distinction between educational goals and objectives. 'The goal of primary education is the acquisition of the fundamental notions of the various fields of knowledge and for which the primary tools are reading and writing. The educational objectives are the following: the development of a critical mind; judgement, analysis, reflection, the acquisition of skills and rational behaviour; improvement of the memory; skills which have to be learned in order to master such key subjects as reading, writing and the spoken word'[22].
- Zambia's report states briefly that 'primary education aims at giving pupils *Basic Knowledge, attitudes and skills* which every child will need in order to realise his/her potential as an individual and also to be able to become an effective participant in the advancement of the country'[23].

Lastly, reference should be made to two African countries whose reports place special emphasis on primary education aimed mainly at objectives of a revolutionary character, at encouraging convinced socialists who will be capable of supporting the march towards socialism undertaken by their governments.

- 'The mission of the First Cycle School — in Guinea — is to prepare the new kind of man called for by the Guinean Revolution, a man able to master both scientific and practical knowledge, an engineer for raising the level of the people and increasing production, a citizen armed with revolutionary ideology and irreproachable morals'[24].
- The report of Madagascar states that its *purpose* is 'to give all children equal opportunities for access to knowledge, to make men free and encourage them to become aware of their duty and their identity', and that its *objectives* are to 'apply a single and innovative programme within the framework of building up a socialist society, bearing in mind the following objectives: the acquisition of knowledge, intellectual and physical education, cultivation of a feeling for observation, a taste for investigation and the critical spirit, the

development of know-how; the application of know-how and the knowledge acquired in daily life and in conformity with the socialist ideology as defined in the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution'[25].

Latin America and the Caribbean

In the case of this group of countries we are also going to begin by referring to those whose reports deal with the question in a concise and general way, not to mention in addition the circumstance that all of them show a clear preference for *integral education* as their priority objective, either implicitly or explicitly.

- As far as Argentina is concerned, 'the objectives of primary education are established on the basis of the evolutionary stages of childhood, in accordance with the child's basic needs and the frame of reference of the Purpose and General Objectives of Argentine Education. These encourage "the development of affection and the social and religious dimensions; the development of will-power and operational and practical thinking"'[26].
- In Brazil, first-grade education has as its general objective 'to provide the pupil with the necessary training for developing his potentialities as an element of self-realization and to qualify him for work and the conscientious exercise of citizenship'[27].
- 'In the Republic of Panama, primary education is understood as being that whose purpose is to encourage and guide the integral growth of the pupil and provide him with the minimum experience likely to make him an efficient citizen in a civilized community'[28].
- Venezuela's report is limited to repeating what is said in this respect in Article 21 of the Education Act of 1980: 'The purpose of Basic Education is the integral formation of the pupil by developing his skills and his scientific, technical, humanistic and artistic abilities; to perform functions of Research, Educational and Vocational Guidance and introduce him to disciplines and techniques which will enable him to do socially useful work; to stimulate every individual's desire and capacity for being, in accordance with his own aptitudes'[29].

Some countries lay special stress on the preparatory nature of primary education as the first step towards studies which, at least in theory, will not stop at this point. This is the case in Cuba and Nicaragua, whose reports also refer directly in the case of the former and indirectly in that of the latter — to other important aspects.

- Concerning Cuba, 'the first cycle of primary education, also called the preparatory cycle, aims at giving the pupils a solid preparation which will help them to assimilate the subjects in the programmes beginning in the second cycle (5th and 6th grades) ... The preparatory cycle given pupils from the 1st to the 4th grade includes a basic knowledge of the mother tongue, mathematics, the world around them, development of the skills and habits necessary for independent work; in addition, it develops a love for study and contributes to the ideological and overall development of the pupils'[30].
- Nicaragua's report is still more succinct and is limited to saying that primary education 'prepares pupils for admission to Middle-Level Education and must ensure the observance of the Aims, Objectives and Principles of the New Education'[31].

The acquisition of basic skills is the primary objective in other countries, such as Bahamas and Jamaica:

- In Bahamas 'at the primary level the instructional programme will be integrated with special attention devoted to English, Reading, Writing and Mathematics. Every effort will be made to include suitable subject content in these and other subject areas to cultivate the attitudes on which knowledge and appreciation of the sciences, particularly agricultural science, can be built. All schools will be encouraged to have gardens, and where it is possible, begin studies in agriculture, and teachers will be encouraged to actively promote these'[32].
- In Jamaica 'the broad goals of primary education are to impart and develop basic skills of literacy, numeracy, learning skills, social skills and the building of positive self-concepts'[33].

But most of the countries in the area devote a large amount of space in their reports to describing the objectives of primary education, so much space that it would be difficult for us to include them all here. In these cases, therefore, a few will be selected which, while naturally being faithful to the texts, will offer the reader the most substantial points.

- If it were not for its considerable length, the description given in Guyana's report should have figured in the preceding section, since it places particular emphasis on the acquisition of basic skills. In short, the objectives of primary education are as follows: communication skills (speaking, hearing, reading and writing); skill in arithmetic, understanding and solving problems; aesthetic understanding and expression; proper psychomotor development; suitable social interaction; self-confidence, self-improvement, patriotism[34].
- Colombia's report begins by recognizing the need to make the best possible use of 'the experiences of the pupil and his surroundings and community participation in the educational process', and then goes on to emphasize the evolutionary process of the pupil in developing his critical thinking, creative ability and his 'willingness to participate in transforming his society', in the assimilation of 'basic concepts, organizational principles and methodological elements' for the purpose of setting and solving problems, in making him aware of axiological and psychomotor aspects, in mastering problem situations, in developing social skills, attitudes and values, and, lastly, in cultivating democratic and responsible participation[35].
- Paraguay's report gives priority to objectives relating to patriotism and social co-existence, and then goes on immediately to objectives aimed at expression, not only of a linguistic nature but also graphic, plastic, musical and physical; following that, it refers to hygienic and health objectives and those aimed at strengthening the family; the acquisition of critical and reflective thinking, the preservation of natural resources, the solution of mathematical problems and operations, the assumption of positive attitudes towards work, the improvement of both a theoretical and practical knowledge of the Spanish language as well as Guaraní, and, in conclusion, the free expression of creativity, all of which are also listed as objectives to be aimed for at this level[36].
- Even more numerous are the objectives assigned to primary education in the Mexican report: self-knowledge and self-confidence; 'a healthy physical, intellectual and emotional development'; reflective thinking and critical awareness; the ability to communicate and to take decisions; an aptitude for working in groups, integration in the family, school and society; identifying, setting and solving problems, an appreciation of one's own culture and that of others; a taste for reading, an aggressive attitude to ignorance 'and all kinds of injustice, dogmatism and prejudice'; the rejection of sexist attitudes, a positive attitude to both physical and intellectual work; a contribution to the ecological balance; a knowledge of Mexico, love for the fatherland, the feeling of national and international solidarity,

‘integrating and relating acquired knowledge in all fields of learning’; and ‘learning by oneself and in a continuous manner with a view to becoming an instrument of one’s development’[37].

- Chile’s report distinguishes between ‘general objectives’ and ‘goals’ (which we may consider ‘operational objectives’). The general objectives are ‘to understand reality in its personal, social, natural and transcendent dimensions; ... to think in a creative, original, reflective, rigorous and critical way; ... to pursue middle-level studies in keeping with one’s aptitudes; ... to conduct himself in life like a responsible citizen ... and participate in community life by fulfilling his duties and insisting on his rights’ (here follows a whole list of values relating to patriotism, love of family, tolerance, understanding and the special values of Christian society). With regard to the operational objectives, the following are listed: ‘to know how to express one’s self correctly, both orally and in writing, in the Spanish language; ... to master the four arithmetical operations and the essential, axiomatic ideas concerning them; ... to know the history and geography of Chile systematically and chronologically, to the extent called for at that level; ... to know ... the elementary notions concerning the natural sciences; ... to know and perform his duties towards his community and insist that it give him his rights; ... to form himself as a person and as a citizen whose behaviour will be in keeping with the attitude and values of our own culture and those concerning which there has traditionally existed a national consensus’[38].
- Peru’s report also distinguishes between two kinds of objective, in this case referring respectively to primary education for children and primary education for adults. For the first of these, the objective is ‘(a) to ensure an adequate mastery of reading, oral expression and writing and elementary mathematics; a basic knowledge of the history and geography of Peru and their relationship with others in the world, and of the principal natural phenomena, with special reference to the actual local and national conditions; (b) to develop the pupil’s cognitive, affective and physical faculties, thus strengthening the basis for his overall education; (c) to stimulate creative ability, to guide vocational development and to encourage the acquisition of safety, order, hygiene, good manners and a well-balanced social relationship; and (d) to promote the knowledge and practice of civic, patriotic, aesthetic and religious values’[39].

Asia and Oceania

The information supplied on the subject with which we are now concerned in some countries in this immense area is rather modest and, in one or two cases, nil. We shall begin by referring to the latter — specifically Viet Nam and New Zealand. From what we have read on their respective curricula, we deduce that in both cases absolute priority is given to literacy goals. In the case of Viet Nam, we also suspect that special attention is being given to objectives connected with social and labour matters (general technology, social activity).

Among those countries which deal very briefly with the subject, Japan merely states that primary education aims ‘to give children between the ages of six and 12 general education suited to their stage of mental and physical development’[40]. India refers to the fact that this level ‘imparts basic minimum skills of literacy, numeracy and inculcation of social and civic values’[41]. Nepal states that ‘the objective of primary curriculum is to make the pupils literate

i.e. to be able to read and write, and express in simple language. One should be able to solve the practical arithmetic problems in one's everyday life'[42].

Although also scanty, the information provided by other countries enables us to form a more precise idea.

- In Malaysia 'the major objective is the total and balanced development of the child. This includes the intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional development as well as the development of the pupils talents and the inculcation of moral, aesthetic and social values. Thus primary schooling is to ensure that every pupil acquires the necessary skills, knowledge and values and attitudes'[43].
- As far as Bangladesh is concerned, what it is first trying to bring about is a significant literacy base, although 'emphasis is to be laid on inculcating ethical values and aesthetics and national identity through learning about folk heroes and the tales of forebearers. There would be familiarisation of local economy and the different production processes'[44].
- Sri Lanka's report prefers to quote literally from the Education White Paper of 1981, which states: 'The Primary School years are an important phase in a Child's development. During this period a child's creative talent needs to be developed and its capacity enhanced so that the child could achieve fulfilment in later life. The quality and variety of the child's experiences and mixture he receives in the primary school will to a great extent influence the subsequent growth of his personality'[45].
- In China: 'The task of our primary education is to educate children to be strong in morality, intelligence and physical constitution so as to lay a sound foundation for their secondary education. The targets are to educate them to love our socialism; to teach them how to read, write and calculate; to pass on to them some basic knowledge of nature and society; to cultivate their good habits of study, so that the students get properly developed both physically and morally, with strong physique and good habits of living and working'[46].
- 'In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the key aim of primary education is to make pupils build a sound foundation for learning the general secondary education. Starting from this aim, the political and ideological education, mental education, art and physical education are properly combined in the primary education'[47].

The reports of the following countries deal more systematically and completely with the subject of the objectives of primary education, emphasizing in each of them some specific aspect. Except for that of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which concentrates largely on the primacy of the objectives of religious instruction, all of them usually agree in first emphasizing the acquisition of basic skills.

- In Thailand, 'The overall objective of primary education aims at achieving the following: (a) permanent literacy and numeracy among the learners; (b) provision of sufficient basic skills and knowledge to the learners to enable them to earn a living commensurate with their age and capabilities; (c) producing law-abiding and good citizens under the constitutional monarchy'[48].
- The report of the Republic of Korea also pays adequate attention to this question[49]. However, we have preferred to quote the statement found in a somewhat earlier publication: 'Article 93 of the Education Law stipulates that the aim of the primary school is to provide the fundamental education necessary for civic life. Furthermore, Article 94 lists the following specific objectives of primary education: (1) to improve the ability to understand and speak correctly the national language necessary in daily use; (2) to improve

moral rectitude, a sense of public duty and the ability to co-operate in improving relations among individuals, groups and nations; (3) to improve the ability scientifically to observe and deal with the natural phenomena occurring in daily life; (4) to develop the ability to lead an independent life by equipping students with fundamental skills likely to be useful in future occupations and daily activities; (5) to instill the understanding to deal with quantitative relationships and proportions to help in the conduct of daily life; (6) to improve the ability to appreciate music, fine arts, literature and other aspects that make life joyful; (7) to develop daily health habits'[50].

- In Indonesia 'the aim of primary education is to develop within the life of young children personality, knowledge and basic skills in order that they are able to pursue their studies at a higher level besides preparing themselves for life in this community'. The objective of primary education is to attain functional basic knowledge by every young child concerning the fundamentals of citizenship and government in accordance with the Pancasila of the 1945 Constitution; religion; the Indonesian language and its usage as a means of communication; basic principles of mathematics; and social phenomena and events happening around him both in the past as well as in the future[51].
- Pakistan's report also states that the first objective is to furnish the child with basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic; it goes on to emphasize the need to equip him with gifts of observation, as well as with a spirit of creativity and invention; then it stresses the need for him to know and practice his religious faith, pointing out the objectives 'to inculcate in children a spirit of patriotism', and 'to acquaint the child with the social environment'[52].
- As already stated, the report from the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the paramount importance of religious and moral education. It assigns the following objectives to primary education: '1. Exaltation of basic belief, recognition and worship of God. 2. Creation of a favorable atmosphere for the purification and moral superiority of students. 3. Fostering students' talents and development of their creative abilities. 4. Development of students' physical strength. 5. Creation of major reading, writing and calculating skills and training of students in proper social behaviour. 6. Instruction in individual hygiene so that it will be observed at home as well as in public society. 7. Development of students' moral and intellectual abilities. 8. Increasing of students' experiences and general knowledge. 9. Helping students to continue the habits of discipline and scientific imagination. 10. Preparing children to comprehend scientific concepts more easily'[53].

Arab States

Let us begin with those countries which present a more concise — although, as we shall see, clear and expressive — description of the objectives of this level of education. Among them, Morocco places rather more emphasis, unusual among the Arab States, on the preparatory nature of this period. Its principal purpose, as we can read in its report, is to prepare pupils for access to secondary education. It also tries to give those pupils who are unable to continue their studies 'an intellectual, civic, moral and religious education'[54]. Tunisia, on the contrary, does not pay too much attention to this preparatory character, but states that the primary education given to children should 'furnish them the necessary basic knowledge, train them spiritually, provide them with a national culture and prepare them for active life'[55]. The Syrian Arab Republic gives priority

to the integration of the various aspects: 'Primary education is aimed at the child's well-balanced and overall development in the physical, psychological, social, moral, national and emotional aspects, by providing him with certain notions and tendencies so that he can make his way in practical life as a citizen, worker and producer and continue his studies in the subsequent cycles'[56].

Other countries in the area give a more detailed description of their objectives. The following three have many points in common; the last two, above all, place particular emphasis on the importance of the objectives of religious education.

- In Jordan, the objectives of what it calls the first cycle are: 'A. To assist the individual to develop physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and spiritually; B. To assist the individual to acquire basic skills in Language, Social and Natural Sciences and Mathematics; C. To assist the individual to develop positive attitudes and respect for work; D. To assist the individual to discover his/her attitudes, abilities and capabilities; E. To assist the individual to pursue an education in higher cycle'[57].
- In Iraq, primary education is aimed at 'enabling all children ... to develop their personalities physically, mentally, morally and spiritually, to become citizens of sound mind, body and morals, working for the well-being of their society, and to achieve its development and progress according to their national and socialist principles of the Arab Baath Socialist Party: 1. Strengthening their belief in God, and their awareness of their national and humanitarian message and their loyalty to their country and nation. 2. Acquiring the tools of basic knowledge and the basis of Arabic and Islamic culture and useful citizenship and their love for science and desire to continue learning. 3. Instilling in their minds the love for work and its practice and teaching them the correct methods of performing work as well as familiarizing them with its implements, particularly in agriculture and industry, and training them to use simple implements'[58].
- Qatar's report offers a broad range of objectives: '1. Upbringing children properly on the sound basis of Islam; 2. Inculcating ... a feeling of national pride and affiliation to their homeland and their Values, traditions and heritage; 3. Achieving an integrated growth for children including the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social aspects; 4. Providing children with the basic instruments of knowledge such as reading, writing and arithmetic and training them on the means of utilizing such instruments properly; 5. Developing the children's imagination and satisfying their curiosity; 6. Familiarizing children with having clean body, clothes and environment; 7. Developing an inclination in the children's minds to respect discipline, co-operation and group work; 8. Helping children to understand their local environment and get acquainted with the sources of wealth and fields of activity ...; 9. Teaching children certain skills and trends to utilize their leisure time in constructive games; 10. Guiding children's interests and developing their ability to feel and taste beauty'[59].

In two Arab States, phasing out the old primary education in favour of a fundamental or basic education has made it necessary to readjust the old objectives.

- Algeria does not have a single package of objectives corresponding to the whole new 'fundamental school' of nine years, but attempts to select them in keeping with each of the three cycles in which it is divided. Thus, it states that the objective of the first cycle 'is to

acquire the basic languages (language, writing, reading and mathematics)'. The objective of the second cycle is 'to acquire, in addition to a better mastery of the basic languages, techniques of analysing and exploring the environment'. In conclusion, the third cycle is devoted to 'increasing a knowledge of the basic languages and the techniques of analysis and investigation, as well as revealing the interests of the pupils and their development with a view to stimulating special vocations and preparing them for instruction in the grades subsequent to the basic period'[60].

- Egypt, whose 1981 Education Act also established a 'basic education' lasting for nine years, prefers, on the other hand, to refer to the objectives which should be pursued throughout the whole period. Accordingly, its report approaches the question as follows: 'Basic education aims at helping the child achieve integral and well-balanced development, equipping him with the bases of aware and productive citizenship, with values of religion, good conduct and patriotism, with knowledge, attitudes and practical experiences. Thus, since the early stages of education, basic education settles the issue of the close relationship between education and productive work, through pre-vocational education and practical training included in the syllabi of basic education. These are branched according to the specific circumstances of various environments — agricultural, industrial, urban and desert'[61].

Western Europe and North America

First of all, let us consider Scandinavian countries, in spite of the fact that the reports to the ICE have not dwelt at length on this point. As far as Sweden is concerned, the curricular revisions carried out in 1969, and particularly in 1980, have not caused any substantial change in the objectives assigned to the 'comprehensive school' by the Education Act of 1962. For children and young people this act set out 'to impart knowledge and to exercise their abilities and in co-operation with their homes, to promote their development into harmonious individuals and into capable and responsible members of society'[62]. The objectives indicated in the Norwegian Education Act of 1969 are still valid, laying emphasis on 'making pupils good members of the community ...; ensure that they receive good Christian and moral instruction; develop their mental and physical abilities; and furnish them with good general knowledge so that they can become useful and autonomous human beings both at home and in the community'[63]. In the case of Norway, it should be added that in 1983 the Minister submitted a report to the National Assembly which contained interesting ideas concerning 'the aims and purpose of the basic school, co-operation with parents, and strengthening of a Christian and moral upbringing, a stronger emphasis on the provision of a solid general knowledge'[64]. With regard to Denmark, we should point out the importance given in its curriculum to disciplines of a technological or pre-vocational nature[65].

In their reports, the central European countries give a brief but clear picture of the objectives assigned to the primary level. There are considerable differences

ences of opinion among them about their respective priorities. However, it would be better to refer to some of them in particular.

- In the Netherlands ‘the aim of primary education is to familiarize children with elementary cultural skills (reading, writing, arithmetic and language) and to give them an initial understanding of the cultural, social and natural environment in which they are growing up’[66].
- In Belgium, ‘the general objectives aimed at by primary education can be summed up as follows: to ensure the harmonious development of the child and his social education; to enable him to acquire basic skills; to reduce inequalities with respect to education’[67].
- In the Federal Republic of Germany, ‘the tasks and objectives of the *Grundschule* are determined by its position within the school system. It is intended for the *Grundschule* to lead its pupils from more play-oriented forms of learning in the elementary sector to more systematic forms of scholastic learning and adapt teaching programmes in form and content to individual learning prerequisites and capacities. The aim of the *Grundschule* is to provide its pupils with the basis for continuing their education’[68].
- In Austria, ‘the educational goal is basic general education preparing for secondary education’[69].
- In France, as provided for in article 3 of the 1975 Education Act, ‘primary education assists in the acquisition of the basic tools of knowledge: oral and written expression, reading, arithmetic. It stimulates the development of intelligence, of artistic sensibility, of manual, physical and athletic aptitudes. It offers an introduction to the plastic and musical arts. Together with the family, it guarantees a moral education and a civic education’[70].

In their reports, some of the countries of southern Europe offer an exhaustive explanation of the objectives assigned to primary education, while others, such as Italy, do not deal with the subject specifically. Since it does not seem necessary to quote the texts of the former in their entirety, we shall simply summarize them.

- Portugal, concerning the objectives of basic education, describes separately those belonging to the first stage (properly called ‘primary education’) and those belonging to the second (‘preparatory education’). The first group includes the following: ‘to contribute to the overall and harmonious development of children in order to ensure their self-realization according to each one’s interests and aptitudes; to encourage the acquisition of basic knowledge and the development of abilities, attitudes and habits which will enable them to continue their studies and become better members of society; to stimulate the development of their aesthetic sensibility and artistic aptitudes; to promote the knowledge of their language and their cultural and historical heritage ...; to encourage individual and group work; to encourage the development of a code of conduct based on civic, moral and religious attitudes ...; to stimulate the development of responsible attitudes towards persons and living beings’. The ‘preparatory education’ stage aims at ‘improving the child’s awareness with a view to inspiring him with a notion of responsibility towards the environment, society and the culture to which he belongs, to encourage civic education ...; make the children discover human values (energy and creativity), furnish them with the tools for intellectual growth ...; open the way for an outlook on contemporary problems, which will enable them later to understand their own motivations and choose their own path in accordance with their own interests’[71].
- In Spain, the objectives of basic general education are defined as follows: ‘the assimilation and functional utilization of habits and techniques which are instrumental for learning, study and individual work; the development of a capacity for imagination, observation

reflection, etc.; the acquisition ... of knowledge which will familiarize the pupil with ... natural and social world around him; the incorporation and development of basic attitudes and desirable behaviour to facilitate the pupil's adjustment and integration in society; the development of his capacity for aesthetic appreciation and expression ...; the acquisition of knowledge, automatisms and skills which will facilitate his vocational and professional guidance; the development of religious and moral attitudes, habits and values; physical development and the acquisition of sensory motor skills ...'[72].

- The following are among the objectives in San Marino: 'to develop life in common ... help the child towards complete development', etc.[73].
- In Cyprus, the general objective of primary education is 'the creation of free and democratic citizens with an all round personality, intellectually developed, healthy, honest, creative members of the society who will contribute positively to the general progress of their mother-country and to co-operation and mutual understanding and respect among peoples'[74].
- In Turkey, the following objectives are set for primary education (of eight years): '(a) acquisition by the child of know-how and the necessary kinds of behaviour which will make him a good citizen; his instruction in a viewpoint in conformity with national morality; (b) the development of his abilities, motivations and aptitudes and preparation for active life or for the higher levels of education in general'[75].

Lastly, let us refer to certain countries in the English-speaking community.

- In England and Wales, 'primary schools aim to extend children's knowledge of themselves and of the world in which they live, and through greater knowledge to develop skills and concepts, to help them relate to others, and to encourage a proper self-confidence. These aims are not necessarily identified with separate subject areas, nor allocated set amounts of time. Often a single activity promotes a variety of skills'[76].
- In Ireland, 'the aims of primary education may briefly be stated as follows: 1. To enable the child to live a full life as a child; 2. To equip him to avail himself of further education so that he may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society'[77].
- In the United States of America, without forgetting that there are usually differences of opinion between the states, 'the main purpose of primary school is the general development of children The program aims to help the pupils acquire basic skills, knowledge and positive attitudes towards learning'[78].
- Canada's report emphasizes that, in view of the educational autonomy of the provinces, primary education includes 'the broad purposes and goals of education and schooling as set out in explicit provincial statements, policies and regulations'[79]. As an important supplement to it states the following about the North-eastern and Yukon territories: 'Objectives of primary education are to develop skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing for effective communication, to acquire basic knowledge and develop skills in mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences and practical and fine arts'[80].

Eastern Europe

In all the countries of Eastern Europe, the objectives specifically assigned to primary education are predetermined in keeping with their far-reaching connection with a broader period of education of a general and polytechnic nature. Within this general framework, the particular scope assigned to the period of primary education varies, as we have seen, from one place to another. To set objectives for a short period of three years — as is the case with

Soviet primary education — is not the same thing as to set them for longer periods, such as eight years (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia). It is not surprising, therefore, that some countries' objectives refer only to the period of primary education as a whole.

- The USSR, after pointing out in its report the connection between one stage and another, nevertheless gives us a fairly complete idea of what it considers the objectives of primary education. 'The content of primary education is conditioned by the general objectives of general secondary education, of which it constitutes the first step. Its tasks are to impart the rudiments of knowledge and a materialistic scientific viewpoint of nature and society, to teach abilities and skills and to prepare the pupils for secondary education. The basic aim is to achieve a certain level of conversation, reading, writing, elementary mathematics and general development; much attention is also paid to moral, aesthetic and physical education, as well as to the preservation of health'[81].
- The Ukrainian SSR's report emphasizes that 'in the Soviet school, in which general education and technical education are intimately connected, primary education also aims at making children conscientious builders of communism, imbued with a scientific viewpoint and communist morality'[82].

Like the USSR, Bulgaria also relates the objectives of primary education to the first three years of general secondary school. Romania relates it to the first four years, and the German Democratic Republic prefers to consider this stage as an inseparable part of the whole.

- 'The objective of primary education [as we read in the Bulgarian report] is to lay the foundations for the overall development of the child's personality, to ensure the best possible time intervals for developing intellectual, ideological and moral qualities; creating an overall idea of the surrounding world, nature, society, human beings, their work and their lives'[83].
- Romania states that the fundamental objectives are 'to teach [them] to read and write ... to teach them numbers and the four operations [addition, subtraction, multiplication and division], to develop their aptitude for arithmetic ... to develop logical and mathematical thinking; to provide a basic knowledge of Romania's history and geography; to develop a scientific conception of the world and of human life; to bring up children in the spirit of socialist patriotism, friendship with all children regardless of their nationality; to develop elementary aptitudes for physical and intellectual work ...; to develop civilized behaviour, decency and good manners, respect for the truth and the spirit of discipline'[84].
- Referring to the ten-year school, the information from the German Democratic Republic states that 'it lays the foundations for pupils' all-round personality development, creative work, subsequent training and later working life'[85].

Lastly, let us consider the countries whose reports describe their objectives by relating them to a primary education period of eight years.

- In Poland, 'the general purpose of primary education is to build up in the individual a polyvalent personality, to prepare him for contemporary life and work in the various fields of human activity, to provide him with knowledge about social, natural, cultural and technical realities'[86].
- In Czechoslovakia, 'the main purposes of primary school shall be to offer the bases for a polytechnical education, to ensure intellectual development, a materialistic point of view,

moral, aesthetic, physical and military preparation and preparation for secondary education'[87].

- In Hungary's case, although one of its reports prepared for the ICE refers at length and in detail to the objectives of education in general, it does not specify which of them are particularly applicable to primary education[88]. However, for this purpose we can consult another official publication which states that 'the function of the primary school is to provide a basic education for each new generation, to develop the pupils' fundamental skills and inclinations, especially their thinking ability, to lay the foundation for the learning of new knowledge, to create in them a need for learning and an ability to learn independently. The primary school must lay the foundations of the ideological and moral demands and customs of communal behavior, of socialist patriotism and internationalism, of the respect for work and for the working man'[89].
- Yugoslavia's report gives the following simple description of its objectives: 'First, primary education lays a foundation for further general and occupational growth; second, it enables young people to continue education at a higher level and develops their sensibilities to new educational, cultural, and working needs'[90].

Some comparisons

In the preceding pages, reference has been made to the objectives assigned to primary education by eighty-four education systems. Obviously, there still remains a great wealth of ideas and many possibilities for drawing useful comparisons. The following pages are merely intended to indicate some of them, in the belief that the abundant material furnished by countries already quoted here deserves much more detailed and far-reaching treatment.

If we consider the aspects that receive most emphasis in each of the definitions of objectives, it would be possible to determine which of them are most widely accepted and which ones, on the contrary, are less relevant or, if one prefers, show greater originality. How to distinguish between them is obviously an important matter which might be discussed at considerable length. As the intention here is to make a merely approximate judgement, attention was limited, among the shorter texts, to quoting what have seemed to be the predominant ideas, and, in the longer texts, either the predominant idea if it was succinctly expressed, or — in the most doubtful cases — the aspect which was indicated in the first place. This brought to light about twenty aspects, in principle distinguishable from each other, which were later compared, with the result that some of them were subsequently combined.

The three aspects which were most frequently singled out as a prior objective (sometimes the sole objective) are the following:

- *basic knowledge and skills* (these include both references of a general nature and specific references to reading, writing, arithmetic, etc.); the most questionable cases would be those where this aspect is singled out as the primary one among several others, with the obvious intention that these others should also be taken into account;

- *overall education or development* (of the pupil, the individual, the person, the personality, etc.); also included here are the objectives which specify in turn the various aspects — intellectual, moral, aesthetic, etc. — of this complete education;
- *a foundation for subsequent education* (including some expressions of a distinctly individual type and even a few — somewhat reluctantly — which view primary education as a preparation for the secondary level).

The number of countries which have chosen to prefer one of these (or similar) viewpoints is as follows: (a) basic knowledge and skills, 28; (b) overall education or development, 26; (c) general basis for subsequent education, 14[91]. These countries amount to a total of sixty-seven.

This leaves seventeen others which have chosen objectives expressing different ideas. Among them, we should point out a group of four countries, all of them African (Benin, Cameroon, Malawi and Togo), which appear to give priority to the integration of the pupil — or the citizen — in his own social and natural environment, with a view to his development as an individual as well as to the socio-economic development of the country. Other countries (Norway, Paraguay, San Marino, the United Republic of Tanzania) seem to be particularly interested in objectives of a social character. Religious instruction seems to be a priority objective in only two reports (the Islamic Republic of Iran and Qatar), although in both cases it is accompanied by other educational aspects which also have to be achieved. It is also included by other countries — at times by a reference to ‘spiritual education or development’ — but among other aspects and not singled out.

Let us now consider the most original cases. One of the most striking is probably that of Ireland, which wants its pupils in their primary education to achieve a full life, first as children and later as adults. In Africa, there are several countries which show a certain novelty in this respect. Rwanda, for example, says that its fundamental objective is to produce ‘productive men’. Burundi is the only country which considers its priority objective to be the teaching of — and in — the mother tongue. Mauritius states that its fundamental objective is the ‘self-education’ of the pupil. Guinea is the only country which emphasizes the creation of a ‘new man’ of a revolutionary character (expressions of this kind, which were perhaps very abundant not long ago, seem to have died down recently). Madagascar considers that primary education should above all aim at establishing equal opportunities for access to knowledge (it is still not clear whether this should be considered as an educational objective, or as a political objective to be achieved by means of primary education). As far as the South American continent is concerned, Paraguay also stands out in emphasizing the need to give priority to ‘patrio-

tism', together with social co-existence, as well as the objective of personal 'self-realization' reported by Brazil (which here has naturally been considered as an objective of 'overall education' and consequently been included under that heading).

There is another aspect which deserves clarification. For example, the scarcity of references to the *vocational* training of pupils, which undoubtedly indicates (as we shall see better when we come to deal with curricula) that many countries do not believe that this is an important function of primary education. Apart from a few references among their objectives to 'respect' or 'love for work', only about a dozen countries refer in any direct way to activity in this connection (Benin, Brazil, Congo, Denmark, Malawi, Iraq, Nigeria, Poland, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, to which we might perhaps add the United Republic of Tanzania and some others).

Also, on the whole, there are not too many references to 'ideological' training in the sense of adopting one specific ideology while excluding others. In various terms, references to this point are to be found among the objectives stated by Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Guinea, Hungary, Madagascar, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Romania, the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR. This number could certainly be increased if expressions about religious education or development were considered as references to ideology.

However, only in a very few cases does religion — or any particular religion — figure among the objectives as an official ideology of the State (as in the Islamic Republic of Iran or in the other Islamic nations). The reader will doubt have also noticed that there is a considerable scarcity among the objectives of explicit references to Christian beliefs and customs (to be found nevertheless, among the objectives listed by Norway and Chile), in spite of which there is a very considerable number of countries where a majority of the population is Christian — of one denomination or another.

There are also not many direct references to training for democracy (the term is used among the objectives set forth by some countries, such as Colombia, Cyprus and Portugal), although there are many which refer to free participation by the citizens, co-existence and mutual understanding, etc. It is pertinent once more to remind the reader that here the literal wording of the texts has been followed, always taken from the reports presented to the ICE or, in exceptional cases, from some other official source.

It would be possible to undertake many other highly interesting comparative studies about the objectives shown in the reports. One of them might be to inquire into the evolution undergone by educational objectives, particularly since the appearance in 1960 of the second volume (devoted to primary education) of *World survey of education* published by Unesco. Another very interesting study would be to compare these objectives of primary education

with the general objectives assigned to education, both synchronically and diachronically[92].

2. CONTENT

A comparative analysis of the content of primary education can be approached in different ways. However, as in the preceding section, we shall begin by describing what is planned to be done in each country, region by region, and only at the end will a few comparative conclusions be drawn. However, since there are a large number of isomorphisms, the reader might be put off by a continuous list of topics and, what is worse, he might fail to notice the sometimes very minor differences between them. For this reason, we have preferred to begin immediately by juxtaposing the content for each geographic area so that a comparative table can be presented relating to the countries in each region. A comparison between the various regions or between countries belonging to two different regions will be dealt with last.

As would probably also be the case with any other methodological option, the one chosen here is not free from certain drawbacks. One of them, perhaps the most important, is due to the different length of time allotted to primary education as a whole in each country. Such time differences can give a distorted view of the actual importance attributed to a subject or to a specific study area in the curriculum. It might well seem, for example, that one country pays more attention than another to learning the native language, while in actual fact primary education lasts only three or four years there, so that learning in that country must be more concentrated than it would be in a country where primary education lasts longer.

To take another example: primary education which lasts three or four years and does not teach a foreign language cannot really be compared with another which lasts for six or eight years and still does not teach a foreign language. However, according to the method proposed here, the absence of a foreign language will receive the same treatment in both cases.

In the final analysis, this means that it is not sufficient to look at the comparative tables included in this section; it is equally necessary to read the explanatory text accompanying them. This is absolutely necessary in the case of the percentages followed by an asterisk(*). For example, in the case of foreign languages, this sign may mean that teaching does not begin in the first-year class but in a later one, the reason for which is supplied in the text. At times, certain disciplines might be covered as part of another field, which could suggest that they are not included in the curriculum, while in reality this is not the case. To sum up, the reader should not draw hasty conclusions from the comparative tables before analysing the relevant text.

In all cases, the tables provide what is the relative *proportion* of time allotted to each subject or subject area as expressed in percentages. For the sake of greater clarity, decimals have been eliminated and percentages have been rounded up or down.

An attempt has been made to include a significant number of countries in the tables, basically by selecting those which have supplied the necessary data in their reports. Countries will be mentioned in the text that are not included in the tables. This is because the information supplied in the report was sufficiently detailed.

Africa

Table 6 lists the countries included in this section. The choice of the expression 'own language' used in the table, instead of others in common use ('native', 'mother tongue', 'national' language), was largely determined by certain countries in the African continent which use languages — in primary education as well as in other fields — which today could not be satisfactorily described by any other expression. 'Own language' is a fairly broad expression which covers all the others and can also be used in exceptional cases.

As far as 'own language' is concerned, the heaviest percentages of time are found in Cameroon and Congo. In the case of the former, although the teachers in charge of the first three years of primary education (which lasts altogether six or seven years, depending on the area) are sometimes unable to teach more than one of the two national languages (French and English), the main reason for the priority given to linguistic studies is because the authorities want to extend bilingualism throughout the country. In Congo, the time allotted to language studies in the schedule reflects the need for an adequate knowledge of French.

At the other extreme, a considerable number of countries seem to devote a rather limited amount of time to their own languages (Rwanda, Seychelles, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia); in all cases, these are countries which, although they have begun to pay considerable attention to the native languages of their pupils, still consider their official language to be that of the metropolitan power, to which, as can be seen, they devote a high proportion of their daily schedule. In the case of Seychelles, in addition to their own language (Kreol) which is taught in the first three courses, they have included two foreign languages (French and English) in their curriculum, so that a considerable amount of time is devoted to foreign languages, as is also the case in the Central African Republic, where the teaching of French takes second place in the daily schedule. In any case, a number of African countries (Malawi, Rwanda, Seychelles, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia) are devoting more time to their

TABLE 6. Africa: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Angola	21	4*	20	17	12	—	8	7	—	11	—
Benin	30	—	16	*	11	—	14	6	11	9	3*
Cameroon	62	—	16	3	6	1 (M)	*	8	—	4	—
Central African Rep.	35	27	23	5	4	6 (M)	*	*	—	—	—
Congo	51	—	14	1	7	1 (M)	9	3	2	13	—
Ethiopia	21	9*	17	8	11	—	12	8	—	14	—
Kenya	19	18	16	10	11	9 (R)	7	10	—	—	—
Madagascar	32	12*	21	5*	2*	3 (M)	17	8	—	—	—
Malawi	17	19	13	12	12	7 (R)	6	5	—	9	—
Mozambique	24	4*	19	17	12	—	7	8	4	4	1*
Rwanda	13	15*	23	4	13	6 (R)	6	6	—	14	—
Seychelles	14	23*	18	8	8	5 (R)	10	6	1	—	7*
Sudan	32	—	21	8	8	15 (R)	7	7	—	2	—
Uganda	12	16	14	14	10	11 (R)	11	9	—	1	—
United Rep. of Tanzania	25	12*	22	10	4	6 (R)	10	6	3	2	—
Zaire	14	17	22	6	13	4 (R)	7	4	5	4	4*
Zambia	17	31	17	8	4	3 (M)	3	2	5	14	—
Average	25.5	12.5	18.0	8.5	9.0	4.5	6.0	7.0	2.0	6.0	1.0

teaching of imported languages than to their own languages. To these countries should be added those cases where imported languages have become their 'own' languages, as in Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Mozambique. Sudan devotes all of its language schedule to Arabic (the teaching of English is begun later in the middle-level school). In addition, the asterisks indicate that the teaching of what are considered foreign languages does not commence in the first course of primary education but in subsequent years: specifically in Angola it begins in the seventh year, in Ethiopia in the third, in Madagascar in the second, in Mozambique in the seventh, in Rwanda in the fourth, in the Seychelles in the second and in the United Republic of Tanzania in the third. For Angola, it should be explained that the percentages refer to its 'basic education' lasting eight years.

In the case of mathematics, there does not seem to be any exaggerated disproportion between countries. Sometimes those which devote less time to this subject pay more attention to science teaching; this is true in Malawi and Uganda. In Congo, on the contrary, less attention seems to be paid to both subjects.

In Madagascar, the existence of a subject entitled 'Learning to be and to live' seems to be aimed at objectives of a social character, although, as it is included in the third to fifth years, it does not on the whole take up a great part of the schedule. Closer to the science studies would seem to be what they call 'useful knowledge' (so here they have been included as an extra 5 per cent under the heading of 'sciences'). As far as Benin is concerned, what is surprising in one respect is the absence of scientific subjects from its curriculum. The report explains, nevertheless, that elementary scientific and technological instruction is provided through what is considered here as practical work and what they themselves simply call 'production' — and more particularly through 3 per cent of time spent on 'family activity and sensorial exercises'. In addition, we note that this is one of the countries which pays most attention to social studies, which would also seem to include a considerable proportion of subjects of a more scientific and natural-history character (again under the heading of 'family economy').

Eight countries in Table 6 provide religious instruction for their pupils, to a limited extent in the case of Zaire (4%) or to a greater extent in Sudan (11%), which is only exceeded by languages and mathematics) and Uganda (11%). Among those which include moral instruction, Cameroon and Congo do so to a very small extent (1%). The four remaining countries make no reference to either one or the other. The report of the Central African Republic does not give specific daily schedules for artistic and physical education, but it doubtless includes both subjects in its curriculum (with respect to the former it refers

expressly to 'singing'); the same is true in Cameroon with respect to artistic education (its report also mentions 'singing').

As we have seen, most countries do not provide a special daily schedule for 'political education'; nevertheless, it should be pointed out that some of them include subjects of this kind in their social studies or even in their ethical instruction (in Cameroon, for example, they mention 'instruction in morals and civics'). Among those which do include this item as a specific subject, there is Benin with 11% devoted to 'civic, ideological and patriotic education'. In contrast, most countries give considerable space in their school programmes to practical vocational activities, generally connected with farming.

With respect to the 'miscellaneous' heading, 'family economy and sensorial exercise' has already been referred to in the case of Benin. In Mozambique, this 1% of the daily schedule is intended for what they call 'school-community relations'. In Seychelles, a certain amount of time is devoted to the 'young pioneers' and to instruction about family life. And in Zaire, we find a subject called 'African traditions' which, although it probably should have figured among the social studies, has been awarded a separate place.

Other countries which are not included in the table show similar patterns. Burundi, for example, gives priority to Kirundi, the national language, which together with mathematics, physical education and the so-called 'study of the environment', are compulsory subjects from the first to the sixth course. 'Study of the environment' covers in one discipline not only the sciences and social studies but also artistic subjects (drawing and singing) and even hygiene and first aid; other subjects, such as a foreign language (French) and productive work, are taught only during the first four years (from the third to the sixth class).

Gabon's report stresses the persistence of subjects typical of the colonial era, with the predominance of the French language, which is the customary medium for teaching, although its standardized, encyclopaedic programmes are poorly adapted to the local environment. Nigeria, on the contrary, does not favour an excessive standardization of subjects, which can be, and in fact are, relatively diverse in different areas. Nevertheless, its Implementation Committee on National Education Policy has recommended a few standard forms, such as, for example, the use of native language as a 'medium of instruction for the first 3 years and taught as a subject during the 6 years of the primary education course'[93]. The teaching of English should also be introduced from the first course and that language should be made a teaching medium during the last three courses for other fields and subjects, including a special vocational course in agriculture and domestic economy. The policies adopted do not differ greatly from those adopted in other countries.

Latin America and the Caribbean

In contrast to the practice in other parts of the world, the original languages of the South American continent are nearly always used only by minorities, which vary in size and importance according to countries. This explains why Latin Americans, with only a few exceptions, consider that their own national language is either Spanish, Portuguese, English or some other language of more restricted scope, but also of European origin. As can be seen in Table 1, this is not only the language to which the primary school gives priority but almost always the only one used. The proportion of time allotted for teaching this language varies between 19 and 37%. Attention is drawn to the fact that here, as elsewhere, the percentages shown may refer only to a certain part of primary education, for instance, to the fifth and sixth classes in the case of Peru; they are presented in this way because this is how they appear in Peruvian report. As far as language is concerned, since the amount of time devoted to it is considerably greater in the early classes, the average percentage for primary education may be assumed to be close to 20% (on the other hand, the figures for sciences, social studies and practical work, which are treated at greater length only in the last years, should be reduced to give an average figure for the whole primary education course).

The reader will observe the absence of foreign languages. This is significant if we bear in mind that for the great majority of countries in this region primary education is considered to last for a period of at least six years. The only apparent exception — El Salvador — is not really different, since the foreign language in question is not included in the curriculum until the seventh year. In Venezuela, it may also be included, at the discretion of the school, with the percentage of time allotted to languages (the percentages reported for Venezuela for all fields and subjects are those provided for the new basic school of nine years).

The case of Chile calls for special consideration. Since 1980, there has been an effort to permit greater flexibility in the apportioning of time to the various subjects. The three which are specifically mentioned (own language, mathematics and social studies) are the *minimum* ones under the current regulations, but they may be increased if this is considered desirable. On the other hand, both sciences and aesthetic and physical education must be included in the curriculum; religion and technical and manual training are options which can be chosen instead of artistic activities. It is also possible to introduce the teaching of some modern language as a part of the field called 'verbal expression'.

As a general rule, the percentages allotted to mathematics are next in importance to those for language and vary between 13 and 31%. The first of the figures is true of Honduras, which seems to have decided to shorten the time

TABLE 7 Latin America and the Caribbean: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Argentina	27	—	26	10	17	—	8	8	—	4	—
Bolivia	27	—	22	12	12	4 (R)	7	7	—	9	—
Colombia	23	—	16	13	17	9 (R+M)	12*	10	—	—	—
Chile*	19*	*	17*	*	13*	*	*	*	—	*	—
El Salvador	19	3*	19	19	16	—	4	8	—	12	—
Guyana	30	—	14	11	7	—	16	6	—	18	—
Honduras	16	—	13	23	13	—	10	—	—	23	2*
Jamaica	33	—	31	12	6	3 (R)	6	3	—	6	—
Mexico	30	—	20	16	12	—	9	6	—	7	—
Nicaragua	25	—	22	11	15	—	8	9	—	10	—
Panama	21	—	18	14	13	6 (R+M)	5	5	—	18	—
Paraguay	30	—	18	25	6	—	—	—	—	9	12*
Peru*	15*	—	18*	15*	14*	8 (R)*	11*	8*	3*	8*	—
Venezuela	19*	—	29*	—	14	—	12	14	—	12	—
Average	24.0	0.2	19.5	13.0	13.0	2.5	8.0	8.0	0.2	9.5	2.0

given to language and mathematics particularly in favour of 'technical education' and which has been included in the table under 'practical work' (counting for 23% of all school activity). At the other extreme, Jamaica assigns a proportion to language and mathematics which is close to two-thirds of total, while on the other hand it shows fairly low percentages for social sciences, practical work and — in particular — physical education.

The percentages devoted to the sciences appear to be much more approximate. In Paraguay, during the three years which make up the first cycle, there is an area which covers 'nature, health and work', while in the second cycle the sciences appear separately with 11% of the total. Consequently, the data given here are approximate, both with respect to sciences and with respect to physical education (which, it must be assumed, falls mainly in the area of 'health'). In the case of this country, it is also difficult to determine the proportion which is really allotted to social studies, since in the first cycle they are included together with language in a field called 'social life and communication', which, as its report explains, is mostly devoted to questions of language. We should, of course, bear in mind that Paraguay is one of the Latin American countries where the greater part of the population is not Spanish-speaking. It is interesting to quote its report on this subject.

In this first cycle, special consideration is given to the linguistic situation of the pupils, especially in rural areas, since children come to school with Guaraní as their only language (this language is the most widespread in Paraguay and is spoken by more than 90% of the population).

Due to the dominance of Guaraní in the country's socio-linguistic context, the 'Social life and communication' field of study, which is allotted 40% of the available time, devotes an extraordinarily high proportion of its efforts towards achieving a satisfactory mastery of Spanish, the official language[94].

Except for Jamaica and Paraguay, to which we have already referred, there is not much variation in the amount of time allowed for the social sciences. There are more differences in the case of artistic and physical education. Of the countries which pays most attention to artistic education is Colombia, but it should be explained that this also includes manual work and some concern for technology, especially in the schools which have adopted the curricular reform introduced in 1976.

Of the fourteen countries represented in Table 7, eight do not state what time is devoted to religious and moral education, although moral education sometimes comes under the social sciences. On the other hand, six countries (including Chile) devote some time to religious instruction which, in Colombia and Panama, expressly includes a certain amount of moral or ethical instruction. On the other hand, political or ideological education is not generally found in the curricula, although questions of civic education are frequently referred to among the social studies.

As far as practical work is concerned, there is not only a considerable variation in the time allocated but also in the conception which each country has of this subject and, of course, the term applied to it. Argentina, for example, describes it as 'practical activities'; Bolivia as 'manual activities'; Mexico as 'technological education'; Honduras as 'technical education'; Paraguay simply as 'work'. Nicaragua makes a distinction between 'education for agriculture and stock-raising' and 'industrial technical guidance'. Panama refers to three different fields: 'agriculture', 'manual activities' and 'education for the home'. Peru prefers to use the expression 'work training' which is close to the 'training for work' used in Venezuela. It might then be concluded that among the diversity of suggestions, what seems to be gaining ground is the need for primary education to devote some time to practical work activities in agriculture in the rural areas and to handicrafts or technology in urban areas.

Some reference has been made previously to the meaning of 'miscellaneous' in these tables. The large figure for Paraguay refers to 'normative activities', which are surely of an artistic nature. The 2% for Honduras represents educational guidance which is also included in Guyana's percentage, together with 'education for living' and 'school-community activities'.

Lastly, a brief reference can be made to some countries which are not included in the table. In the case of Brazil, there are no educational areas or subjects which have not already been referred to. In connection with religious education, its report states that 'it is compulsory for schools of official education and optional for the pupils'[95]. But what should be noted particularly in this case is that 'the states and municipalities add other subjects which have not been provided for at the national level; the schools respect their wishes and, in turn, are able to add other subjects. It is, therefore, difficult to describe a curriculum which concerns Brazil as a whole'[96].

In Cuba,

... the most time is allotted to mathematics, 5 times a week, Spanish and Reading with 5 times a week from the 1st to 3rd grade and 4 times in the 4th grade. Other subjects are also included, such as Physical Education (3 times a week), Plastic Arts (once a week); Musical Education and Dancing (once a week) and Education in Practical Work (twice a week). The 3rd and 4th grades include Natural Sciences, with 2 classes per week, and the 4th grade 'political life in my Fatherland', once a week, and History, with 2 classes per week. The curriculum for the 5th and 6th grades comprises a general total of 2,000 hours, distributed in a curriculum in which the most important allotments are to Mathematics and Spanish[97].

Asia and Oceania

Except for Viet Nam, which devotes an unusually high percentage of time to teaching its own language, and Tonga, which assigns very little time to this

subject, the remaining countries in Table 8 devote similar amounts of time to language teaching. For Tonga, the English language is predominant, which, for the purposes of Table 8, has been considered as a foreign language.

The case of Malaysia deserves special mention. There, the existence of different curricula, depending on the type of school, has not prevented the widespread curriculum being that of the schools which use Bahasa Malaysia. These schools, as we can see, also devote an appreciable proportion of their time to English, but the time spent on foreign languages can also be increased by teaching Chinese or Tamil, when a minimum number of the pupils' parents request it. But in schools situated in Chinese- or Tamil-speaking areas, the teaching of one of these languages is made compulsory, together with that of Bahasa Malaysia, thus considerably reducing the time devoted to English (which also remains in the curriculum). Moreover, it should be pointed out that the new curriculum combines sciences and social studies in a single field ('Man and his surroundings'), with a rather shorter length of time being assigned to both. On the other hand, considerable time is devoted to Islamic religion, which in the case of non-Muslims is usually replaced by moral education.

The other countries which include foreign languages do not do so in the first year but later on: Bangladesh in the third year, like Pakistan; and Sri Lanka in the fourth.

There is nothing especially remarkable in Table 8 about the teaching of arithmetic and notions of mathematics, except perhaps the large proportion of time devoted to them by Sri Lanka and the rather small amount by Tonga. Tonga, on the other hand, devotes a higher percentage of its time to the sciences. As far as Viet Nam is concerned, we should explain that the percentage indicated for the sciences includes two separate subjects: 'general science' and 'general technology'. In this respect, the country's report states that:

The content of scientific education for primary level is first of all the education on world outlook and on dialectic materialism for pupils. Then providing for them some understandings on the nature of other sciences suitable to their outlook, their living environment, their intellectual capacity and their psychological characteristics[98].

This is perhaps the reason why so little time is devoted to social sciences and why there is no such subject as political or ideological education. In the case of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Tonga, the absence of social studies as a separate subject is due to the fact that, under the name of 'environmental science' or something similar, they include the corresponding subjects in a single scientific area (so that in the three cases mentioned above, the percentage assigned to sciences is fairly high).

TABLE 8 Asia and Oceania: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Bangladesh	28	10*	19	17	—	9 (R+M)	13	9	—	—	—
Indonesia Islamic	25	—	19	10	4	8R + 6M	10	8*	—	10	—
Rep. of Iran	34	—	19	11	6	14 (R+M)	8	8	—	—	—
Japan	27	—	17	10	10	4 (M)	14	11	—	2*	5*
Malaysia	31	18	17	5	5	11 (R+M)	7	3	—	—	3
New Zealand	32	—	17	8	10	—	10	15	—	8	—
Pakistan	21	10*	15	13	10	12 (R)	10	5	—	4	—
Rep. of Korea	23	—	16	11	10	7 (M)	10	15	—	4	4
Sri Lanka	26	6*	29	14	—	4 (R)	6	6	—	9	—
Tonga	12	25	13	19	—	5 (R)	9	4	—	8	5*
Viet Nam	42	—	19	12*	3*	4 (M)	8	8	—	4*	—
Average	27.5	6.5	18.5	12	5.5	7	8.5	8.5	—	4.5	1.5

In accordance with its present priorities, a large part of the daily schedule of the Islamic Republic of Iran is devoted to religious education, which includes moral teaching. This proportion is also high in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan. In Indonesia, 'religious education' and 'Pancasila moral education' are considered separately. The Republic of Korea and Japan also devote a part of their time to moral education, which in private Japanese schools can be devoted to religious teaching. Among those in Table 8, Japan is certainly the one which devotes the largest amount of time in its daily schedule to aesthetic and artistic education, just as the Republic of Korea and New Zealand assign rather high percentages to physical education. In Indonesia this also includes 'hygiene'. None of the countries mentioned provide a separate course for political or ideological education, although we should recall what has been said about Viet Nam (which doubtless also provides such a subject as 'ethics', which certainly assumes an ideological character).

As is typical, 'practical work' in Table 8 is known by very different names. In the case of Indonesia, it is interpreted as 'special skills'. Japan considers that there are two subjects which are likely to involve a certain proportion of manual activity: 'home' and 'special activities'; nevertheless, as it specifies in its report, 'the number of hours for special activities indicated ... includes hours for classroom assemblies, club activities and pupil guidance', so it would seem more suitable to list them under the 'other' heading[99]. On the other hand, New Zealand specifically mentions a considerable amount of 'manual training'; Sri Lanka also devotes a large period to 'creative activities'; Tonga specifies that it conducts 'out-of-school work', but does not explain what this consists of (the percentage shown under 'miscellaneous' refers to recreation which is included as such in the daily schedule). The Republic of Korea provides, on the one hand, for 'practical arts' and on the other for 'extracurricular activities' (here included under 'miscellaneous').

We have preferred not to include Thailand in the table, although its report contains very precise references to its curriculum and daily schedule. The reason is the rather ideosyncratic combination of skills and knowledge, which is difficult to fit into the more traditional categories shown in Table 8. The curriculum in question consists of the following five branches, each of which is followed by the percentage of time allotted to it: (a) 'skills' (includes language and mathematics) — 34%; (b) 'living experience' (includes sciences and social studies) — 19%; (c) 'character development' (includes moral, physical and aesthetic education) — 22%; (d) 'guided work' — 18%; (e) 'special' (includes both subjects of 'guided work' and 'English language' — 6%.

Nepal's report does not supply any data about the time devoted to subjects but it is interesting to note that, together with the traditional subjects

language, arithmetic, social studies, science and health, physical education, arts and moral education, it also includes more original subjects, such as 'environmental education' and 'education for the people'. In the case of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we have already referred, when talking about objectives, to the importance attached there to political and ideological education, together with more traditional subjects. China does not seem to devote a specific subject in its curriculum to ideological education, but apparently does include subjects of this kind, especially through 'moral education'. More specifically, its report sums up its educational content as follows:

Full-time primary schools have subjects of Chinese, math, moral education, physical training, music and drawing. Grades III, IV and V have [nature study]. Grade IV offers geography and Grade V history. Both Grades IV and V have physical labour. Some schools have courses of foreign languages if they have teachers[100].

And somewhat farther on, it adds the following concerning moral education:

The purpose of moral education is to arm pupils with the spirit of patriotism and collectivism and the sense of being masters of the country. The major components of this education are as follows: to teach the pupils to love the people, the motherland, work, science and socialism, to study hard, to think of the collective to which they belong, to take care of public property, to observe discipline, to have good manners and be courteous and plain-living[101].

The following applies with reference to India:

In Classes I and II study of language, mathematics, environmental studies, work experience and the arts and health education and games is prescribed. Classes III, IV and V include the teaching of language, mathematics, social studies, general science, work experience and arts, and health education and games. Classes VI, VII and VIII have courses of Hindi and English language, mathematics, social science, art, work experience and physical education, health education and games. The curriculum proposed in 1975 has tended to bring about a much needed uniformity in the syllabi prescribed for schools in different states[102].

In this respect, Australia has a considerably different point of view, which not only gives liberty to a variety of forms in the states but even in the schools themselves.

Teachers may adopt a variety of organisational forms including team teaching, an integrated day, in which learning is a continuous process not interrupted by breaks every 30-40 minutes or constrained by subject barriers, and non-grading or family or vertical grouping which contains children from a range of ages, usually in a small school[103].

However, its report adds that certain states do propose minimum allowances of time for the fundamental branches (language, mathematics, social studies and others).

Arab States

At first glance, the countries included in Table 9 show a remarkable homogeneity with respect to subjects and the time allotted for them. With respect to their own language (Arabic), the schedules and percentages assigned to it are very similar, with perhaps the exception of Kuwait, and almost the same can be said with regard to mathematics, sciences, religion and physical education. There are more considerable differences with respect to foreign language, artistic education and practical work. But before discussing these differences, the situation with respect to the curriculum in Morocco should be explained.

The information provided by Morocco in its report[104] does not give a complete picture of its usual curriculum. The percentages shown in this report relate to only a few subjects, each one considered within its respective cycle. If we compare the data supplied with those included in another official publication[105], we note that some of the percentages included in the first report present only an approximate and, in the case of sciences and technology, a confusing picture.

Returning to the Arab States as a whole, with four exceptions they include the teaching of one foreign language, which is usually related to their recent political history. Morocco (in year III) is the one where most time is required and where teaching begins earliest. Three other countries (Bahrain, Algeria and Jordan) begin teaching a foreign language in year IV and the two remaining ones in Table 9 in the fifth year.

As far as aesthetic and artistic education is concerned, there is a considerable difference between the time allotted to it by Morocco, Bahrain, or the Syrian Arab Republic. Only half of the countries include work or practical activities. Egypt does so under 'practical training or pre-vocational activities', to which should be added 'agricultural education' for boys and 'domestic economy' for girls. In Iraq, the percentage as a whole covers 'agricultural education'. Jordan offers 'vocational training' with broader objectives. Kuwait devotes a high percentage to 'practical studies', although this also includes drawing and various kinds of practical work. As far as the Syrian Arab Republic is concerned, the term 'school activity' does not suggest that this is really an immediate preparation for work. In addition, it should be borne in mind that artistic education in Saudi Arabia includes technical drawing and manual work, that it might have been placed under 'practical work'.

Even in countries where rather little attention is paid to social studies, there are some obvious differences. Kuwait and Morocco certainly devote very little time to them; Algeria, which is one of those which devotes the most time to social studies, nevertheless includes them in political education. It is also necessary to consider the extent to which religious education does or does not

TABLE 9 Arab States: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Algeria	30	16*	19	10	7*	5 (R)	7	6	*	—	*
Bahrain	30	10*	18	8	6	8 (R)	13	7	—	—	—
Egypt	32	—	20	9	6	10 (R)	10	8	—	5*	—
Iraq	30	4*	18	11*	5*	8 (R)	9	8	3	3*	1*
Jordan	29	9*	15	12	7	11 (R)	6	4	—	7	—
Kuwait	35	—	15	8	2	10 (R)	7*	9	—	9*	5*
Morocco*	30	19*	15	3	3	14 (R+M)	4*	4*	—	*	8*
Qatar	30	4*	17	7	6	20 (R)	8	8	—	—	(3)*
Saudi Arabia	30	—	15	8	4	31 (R)	5*	7	—	*	—
Syrian A. R.	31	—	16	10	8	9 (R)	12	9	—	5	—
Average	31	6	17	8.5	5.5	12.5	8	7	0.3	3	1.5

include subjects of a social nature. In the very considerable amount of time which Saudi Arabia devotes to 'religious studies' there are also included such subjects as 'Islamic jurisprudence' and 'Islamic traditions'.

The 'miscellaneous' heading mainly refers to an indeterminate period of 'recreation' which is provided for in the Algerian curriculum. It also covers a small percentage of 'family education' in Iraq and a much larger percentage of 'free activity' in Kuwait. We have already referred to Morocco. Lastly, the time assigned to Qatar is shown between brackets because it only applies to girls who are given 'feminine education', thanks to less time allotted to physical education and science, a schedule which is therefore somewhat shorter than that assigned for both subjects for boys.

Tunisia, which was not included in the table, follows similar patterns during its eight years of basic education. French is included as a foreign language from the fourth year of studies and continues until the seventh; during these years the amount of time devoted to Arabic is gradually reduced. It is also planned to extend the practice of 'manual work' to all schools (today only a few include it); this already begins in the fifth year but takes up most of the school schedule in year VIII.

Western Europe and North America

For a better understanding of Table 10, an explanation must first be given of the three countries marked with asterisks: Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland.

In Belgium, there are some differences with respect to percentages and even subject-matter between the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking schools. The proportions given here apply to the French-speaking sector, where 'own language' and mathematics are given more time than in the Flemish-speaking sector; on the other hand, beginning in the third year, the latter introduces the teaching of a second language, usually English or French. The percentage assigned to 'artistic education' includes a certain amount of 'manual work'.

With regard to the Federal Republic of Germany, although all the branches and subjects shown in the table are compulsory in all the *Länder* (with a few exceptions to which we shall refer), the *Länder* do not always assign the same percentages to them. Those given here are for Lower Saxony, which do not differ greatly from those for other *Länder*[106]. Classes in religion are not compulsory in Hamburg or Bremen; in the latter city they do not refer to any specific religion, but teach 'biblical history' which is suitable for both Protestants and Catholics. In the other *Länder* attendance in either Catholic or Protestant classes is obligatory for the pupils. It is also important to note that besides the compulsory subjects, there is also a large percentage of supplementary

mentary classes, which are here included under 'miscellaneous'. These classes, which may be held in either small or large groups, are aimed at supplementing the compulsory subjects for certain pupils. As for the percentage assigned to 'artistic education' and 'practical work', they could just as well have been presented together, since the latter is considered as 'creative manual activities' and 'creative work with textile materials'.

In its report, Switzerland does not supply data about the time allotted to *all* branches and subjects but only about the five branches included in the table, bearing in mind that in this case, too, 'artistic education' and 'manual work' are combined. The percentages therefore relate to these five branches without including others which are also compulsory, such as physical education and sports occupying three periods per week. 'Another subject', the report adds, 'which has already been introduced or is going to be introduced is a second national language beginning in the fourth year (in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland), with 2 or 3 lessons per week'[107].

Let us now look at the sum-total of countries shown in Table 10 and the percentages given for each branch of study. Under 'own language', aside from the special case of Luxembourg, the lowest percentages are for the Federal Republic of Germany and Turkey. However, we must remember that the 'supplementary teaching' provided for in the Federal Republic of Germany is often intended to promote this subject. Cyprus, on the contrary, shows the highest percentage (as noted, that of Switzerland must be interpreted with caution).

Most European countries are already including the teaching of foreign languages in the primary level. The case of the Federal Republic of Germany — with none at all — and that of Austria — with a low percentage — should not be considered as too significant, since it should be borne in mind that primary education in both countries only lasts four years. The Federal Republic of Germany does include a considerable amount of teaching a foreign language in the fifth year of all types of compulsory school. In both countries some experiments have been made in introducing a foreign language (generally English) at the primary level. Consequently, the two countries in Table 10 which seem to be most reluctant to introduce a foreign language at this level are France and Spain. Luxembourg is a bilingual country in the strictest sense of the term, since French and German are used simultaneously; all children learn both, from primary school on, allowing only a very small amount of time for the Luxembourg dialect, which means that more time is allotted to the linguistic branch in general (51%!) than in any other country.

The amount of time allotted for basic mathematics is more or less the same for all countries, except for French-speaking Belgium (note that the percentage is lower in the Flemish-speaking part).

TABLE 10. Western Europe: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Austria	30	2*	17	13		9 (R)	11*	11*	—	7	*
Belgium*	32	*	28	14		7 (R+M)	11*	8	—	*	—
Cyprus	37	3*	17	7	8	6 (R)	13	6	—	3	—
Denmark	28	5*	16	4	10	5 (R)	12	9	—	8*	3*
Finland	25*	6*	15	17*		7 (R)	14	8	—	7	1*
France	33	—	22	26*		—	*	19	—	*	—
Fed. Rep. Germany*	20	—	20	13			7*	12	—	9*	10*
Luxembourg	3	48*	17	11*		9 (R)	3	3	—	5*	—
Norway	23	6*	16	17		10 (R)	20*	8	—	*	—
Spain	28*	—	16	14		10 (R)	20	12	—	—	4*
Switzerland*	35	*	23	15		6 (R)	27*	*	—	*	—
Turkey	24	4*	16	11	12	5 (R+M)	7	7	—	14	*
Average	26.5	6	18.5	8	8	6.5	12	8.5	—	4.5	1.5

One characteristic which is to be found in many European countries is the integration of science and social studies, so that it is difficult to separate them. It should be pointed out that in the case of France the percentage allotted to what is known there as *activités d'éveil* also includes artistic education, practical work and even moral education — an interesting combination. On a much smaller scale is the integration of teaching practised in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria under the name of *Sachunterricht*. In French-speaking Belgium, they prefer to use the expression 'exploration and conquest of the environment'. Finland and Luxembourg combine science and social studies in an unusual way. Thus, in Finland, separate amounts are for 'environmental studies', 'natural history and geography', 'history and social studies' and 'civic education', but it would be obviously difficult to classify any of them under 'sciences' or 'social studies', so a certain percentage has been allocated to each. In Luxembourg, 'intuitive education', 'geography', 'national history' and 'local environment' are all included together. Some countries, like Cyprus, Denmark and Turkey, prefer to adhere to the traditional distribution. With regard to Turkey, it should be explained that the percentages given here have been applied to the eight-year primary school and not the former one of five years, the content of which is also referred to in that country's report[108]: this may perhaps be a partial explanation of the high percentage assigned to both branches.

Most of the European countries, to a greater or lesser extent, include religious education in their curricula. Among the most notable exceptions is France, whose public primary schools do not intervene on this question, for which reason one recess day per week (which for a considerable number of years now has been on a Wednesday) is set aside so that religious education can be taught outside the school.

It has already been noted that some countries have placed artistic education in a close relationship with practical work. In Austria, beyond the high percentage of compulsory attendance, pupils may also spend additional hours in school on musical education (choral singing, musical instruments or theatre work). In contrast to the situation in the Federal Republic of Germany, the percentages allotted to artistic education in Spain, Norway and Switzerland include manual work, which is why they are so high. As far as physical education is concerned, the percentage assigned to it in France is very high, while in Austria, as with artistic education, it can be increased optionally by the pupils.

As a separate subject, political and ideological education is not to be found in any of the curricula referred to. However, it must not be forgotten that in most countries there are subjects of citizenship, public morality, etc., included with 'social studies'.

Concerning practical work, we find that it is not generally connected with economically productive activities but with work of general and artistic education. A different trend is to be found only in the case of Cyprus and Turkey. Cyprus devotes a percentage (incidentally rather small) to 'domestic economy and practical work', while the Turkish school, with a course lasting eight years, devotes a high percentage of its time to 'technological education' beginning with the fourth year. This branch permits various choices: agriculture, technical/vocational training, business and domestic economy.

Under 'other', the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria have already been referred to. Beginning in the seventh year, Denmark allows time for 'optional or elective disciplines', which explains why it was included. Spain has provided for one hour per week of 'free time', especially intended — at least in theory — for school activities connected with the environment. Last year, Finland and Turkey provide for 'school guidance' activities.

It is now time to refer briefly to some countries which are not included in Table 10. Some have no universal curricula or compulsory courses. This is particularly the case for England and Wales:

There is no central direction or control of the curriculum and no indication by central government of a minimum content. There is, however, a great deal of consensus throughout the country on the nature and balance of the primary school curriculum; and great emphasis is given in all primary schools to numeracy and literacy (e.g. there are daily lessons in reading, writing and mathematics). ... the time given to numeracy and literacy is not normally less than 50% in any given week. Some [local education authorities] do, however, offer specific guidelines — in a range of subjects — and all, through their advisers and teachers' groups, continue to renew their programmes, schemes of work and timetables. An increasing emphasis on science and technology (including the use of microcomputers) has been developed in the last 5 years or so[109].

Something similar is stated in the report of the United States of America:

There is no national standard curriculum followed by primary schools in the United States. The type of curriculum varies considerably from one state to another. In general elementary school classes are conducted in reading, oral and written language, mathematics, science, social studies (civics, geography, history, other cultures), art, music and physical education. Currently there are no up-to-date national studies of the time spent on various subjects in the different grades. The minimum time required to be spent on each subject varies from state to state and is met or exceeded by each local school district[110].

Other countries lay down specific requirements, even with regard to the number and name of the subjects taught, but leave complete freedom as to how they should be distributed. In the Netherlands, for example:

Primary education comprises 11 compulsory subjects ... and 15 optional subjects. The amount of time allocated to each of these subjects is determined by the competent authorities and is not governed by regulations[111].

After mentioning the usual subjects in the curriculum, Ireland's report explains that:

...flexibility of approach is the essential element of this curriculum so the Department of Education does not specify the number of hours or days which should be allocated to each aspect nor does it set targets for individual classes[112].

On the contrary, other countries not included in Table 10 are more explicit in determining the content of study although not the amount of time allotted to it. Portugal includes the usual subjects (although it should be noted that it introduces the study of a foreign language in the fifth year, i.e. the first year of the preparatory cycle), but with respect to time schedules it explains that 'in primary education the distribution of time allotted to each subject is the responsibility of the teacher'[113]. Malta specifies the time devoted to each subject, with schedules which are fairly similar to those we have noted in the case of other countries. In Italy today there is a profound replanning of both subjects and time schedules, which are still influenced by old traditions. As stated in a recent document, a Commission set up in 1981 and composed of representatives of the various political parties is slowly proceeding to draw up policies and programmes:

Primary education is therefore on the threshold of widespread changes, and the present situation should be thought of as transitional. The immediate future raises questions of content and method: there seems to be a growing consensus for both refashioning teaching programmes and introducing structural and institutional reforms[114].

Eastern Europe

Although this group of countries has obvious features in common, different ideas about the duration of primary education lead to differences which at first glance might seem important. It will be noted, for example, that the four which state that they have eight years of primary education (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia) allot the most time to the group consisting of the sciences and social studies, while the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR, with a primary period of only three years, do not yet include social studies and assign small percentages to the sciences. On the other hand, these same countries show the highest percentages in the group consisting of languages and mathematics. Bulgaria, which is also among the countries with three years of primary education, still does not include sciences in these years, although its 'social studies' are designed in such a way that they undoubtedly leave room for some basic scientific notions.

For similar reasons, we must look with some caution at the differences which appear to exist about the introduction of a foreign language. Apparently, neither Romania nor the USSR include it at primary level, but in both countries this study actually begins in the fifth year of compulsory schooling, which

TABLE 11. Eastern Europe: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Country	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Bulgaria	35	5*	18	9*	—	—	9	14	—	10	—
Byelorussian SSR	32	16*	24	4	—	—	8	8	—	8	—
Czechoslovakia	29	7*	21	11*	9*	—	5	8	2	6	2
German Dem. Rep.	38	7*	21	4	4	—	9	9	—	8	*
Hungary	25	6*	18	12*	7*	—	12	10	—	6	4
Poland	25	5*	19	12*	9*	—	9	9	1	8	3
Romania	37	—	21	3	9	—	17	9	—	4	—
Ukrainian SSR	38	16	23	4	—	—	8	8	—	3	—
USSR	46	—	25	5	—	—	8	8	—	8	—
Yugoslavia	23	7*	21	13*	9*	—	15	9	—	1*	1
Average	33	7	21	7.5	5	—	10	9	0.3	6	1

is identical to the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Hungary and Yugoslavia begin it in the fourth year, Bulgaria in the third, the Byelorussian SSR in the third and the Ukrainian SSR in the first. In all countries, except Yugoslavia, Russian is the compulsory foreign language (in the Romanian *gimnaziu* the two foreign languages which are given — one in the fifth and another in the sixth year — are also optional). As is easily understandable, the percentages assigned to Russian as a second language are particularly high in the Byelorussian and Ukrainian SSRs.

There are few differences with respect to mathematics. It is interesting to note that the traditional custom of dividing the sciences and social studies into separate subjects is losing ground, especially in the early courses, in favour of a certain integration of subjects common to both branches, similar to practice in other areas and especially in Western Europe. Thus, for example, Yugoslavia includes a branch entitled 'society and nature' for pupils in the first four years, and history and geography, taught separately, are not included until the fifth year, while biology, physics and chemistry are taught, always in succession, in the following years. In Czechoslovakia, they begin — in the first and second years — with so-called 'introductory lessons' of a comprehensive nature, which are subsequently followed (in the third and fourth years) with 'the history and geography of the country', while a clear distinction between scientific and social subjects is made in the fifth year. In Poland, the integrating subject of the first courses (in this case the first three years) is called 'social and natural environment', while the usual differentiation begins in the fourth year. In Hungary, the overall subject 'environment' lasts for four years. In Bulgaria, scientific and social studies are introduced in a subject called 'study of my native land'. In all the other countries, on the contrary, there is still a preference for a clear distinction between scientific subjects proper and social studies. In the USSR (including in this case the Byelorussian and Ukrainian SSRs), the first three years are reserved for what is mainly an introductory course in science, so that social studies are not included in this period. The German Democratic Republic follows a considerably different policy and does not introduce either sciences or social studies until the fifth year, and then in the form of completely separate subjects in the traditional style (biology, geography, history, etc.). In Romania, introductory science is given, to a small extent, in years II, III and IV, while in the last two much more time is given to Romanian history and geography, both local and national.

It should be borne in mind when interpreting Table 11 that the integrating subjects taught in some countries have been listed in the column for 'sciences' and followed by asterisks.

In all the countries of this region, religious education is expressly forbidden. Political education is usually not taught separately until after primary educa-

tion. The only two cases where the curriculum includes 'civic education' as a separate subject have been recorded, but it is necessary to point out that there are official provisions for instilling in children a materialistic and communist view of the world and society through other subjects, although this point is particularly stressed in the special reports submitted to the ICE in 1984.

Strikingly high percentages are allotted to artistic education in Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. With regard to Romania, we should explain that this includes the time intended for 'handwriting' (the percentage, therefore, obviously drops in subsequent years). In Yugoslavia, the importance attached to this subject is obviously related to the very low percentage allotted to 'practical work' in the regular schedule, although the performance of 'community work' is also considered as an additional activity. All the other countries have provided for a considerable amount of time for this kind of work under the heading of 'manual work', 'productive work', etc.

With respect to the 'other' column, the German Democratic Republic also offers 'sewing' as an elective subject, which because of its optional character is not included among the percentages. On the other hand, an 'alternative compulsory subject' is included for all pupils in the last two years of the Czechoslovak primary school. Likewise in Hungary there are optional subjects which are compulsory in the last two years — but the percentage given here is larger because it includes a few hours which are left to the 'discretion of the headmaster'. This idea is also found in Poland ('hours at the teacher's discretion'), which like Yugoslavia also adds one hour per week during year VIII for 'defensive activities' or, in other words, 'pre-military training'.

Some comparative considerations

First of all, Table 12 shows the average percentages for all regions and the world average. According to this table, the priority subjects in the primary school curricula, on the world scale, appear in the following order: own language (28%); mathematics (19%); sciences (9.5%); aesthetic and artistic education (8.5%); physical education (8%); social studies (7.5%); foreign languages (6.5%); practical work (5.5%); religious or moral education (5.5%); other studies (1.5%); political or civic education (0.5%).

This order of preference calls for a few explanatory comments. 'Practical work' and 'religious and moral education' show the same percentages, but while practical work is found in the curricula of all regions, religious education is absent from one of them; it seems logical, therefore, to place the former before the latter. Moreover, it should be remembered what has already been said about religious or moral education and political or civic education, namely that both are taken into account here as constituting *specific areas*.

TABLE 12. World: subjects of study and percentage of time devoted to each subject

Region	Own language	Foreign language	Maths	Science	Social studies	Relig. or moral	Art	Physical ed.	Political	Practical	Other
Africa	25.5	12.5	18.0	8.5	9.0	4.5	6.0	7.0	2.0	6.0	1.0
Latin America	24.0	0.2	19.5	13.0	13.0	2.5	8.0	8.0	0.2	9.5	2.0
Asia and Oceania	27.5	6.5	18.5	12.0	5.5	7.0	8.5	8.5	—	4.5	1.5
Arab States	31.0	6.0	17.0	8.5	5.5	12.5	8.0	7.0	0.3	3.0	1.5
Western Europe	26.5	6.0	18.5	8.0	8.0	6.5	12.0	8.5	—	4.5	1.5
Eastern Europe	33.0	7.0	21.0	7.5	5.0	—	10.0	9.0	0.3	6.0	1.0
Average	28.0	6.5	19.0	9.5	7.5	5.5	8.5	8.0	0.5	5.5	1.5

separate subjects in the curricula. Here we have only counted the cases where one or both of them are expressly mentioned as a distinct and separate branch of education. The relatively numerous cases, therefore, in which civic or moral education are included as a part of 'social studies' remain unaccounted for. It is also important to explain the policy followed when 'sciences' and 'social studies' are combined within a curriculum to form an integrated or combined subject. As there are fewer of these cases than those which include both branches separately, they have been listed separately in Table 12. For the purpose, we have divided the percentage assigned to the integrated or combined branch into equal or approximate percentages. Lastly, figures have been rounded off to facilitate reading the table.

As can be seen, there are no excessive disproportions between areas as far as 'own language' and mathematics are concerned. In both cases, the countries of Eastern Europe show the highest averages. The lowest ones are for Latin America in the case of 'own language' and the Arab States for mathematics. In neither of these cases does the problem, already frequently referred to, of different lengths of primary education seem to be of decisive importance.

On the other hand, as far as sciences and social studies are concerned, the countries of Eastern Europe show the lowest percentages, while Latin America seems to value them highly. It is interesting to note that in Asia and Oceania there is a considerable disproportion in the time allotted to both branches in favour of the sciences. Both in Latin America and Europe, on the other hand, the proportions are very evenly balanced (in the latter case this may be influenced by the integrated studies already referred to).

The differences with respect to religious (and/or moral) education are much more striking. While in one region this is given very prominent attention, much so that this branch ranks third among priorities (after 'own language' and mathematics), in another it is completely lacking. There are some other aspects of interest concerning this point which will be dealt with a little farther on.

Both Western and Eastern Europe show the highest percentages of time allotted to aesthetic and artistic education, as well as to physical education: in the case of the latter, the differences between regions are very slight.

Only in Africa is a considerable percentage of time allotted to political and civic education as a separate branch. Everywhere else the conclusion seems to be that there is no point in introducing these studies in the curriculum, at least at the primary school level.

Exactly the contrary is true of what we have classified here as 'practical work', which actually is a combination of very different kinds of activity, ranging from mere instruction to those which are also aimed at producing consumer goods. This work frequently supplements artistic activities. At least at first

glance, it may be surprising that the highest percentage of time allotted to these activities is to be found in Latin America, where primary education is frequently criticized for its impracticality and its disregard for its own environment; it would be very interesting to go into this point in greater depth.

The number of unconventional subjects is fairly small, judging by the percentages included under 'miscellaneous'. If particular cases are examined, it can be observed that the most commonly repeated idea is that of additional or supplementary teaching, whether compulsory or optional; in some cases this teaching is listed as being 'at the discretion' of the headmaster or teacher. In a few cases — perhaps fewer than might theoretically be expected — time is allowed for 'educational or vocational guidance'. Some original activities were also singled out on occasion, especially in the African continent.

Looking at the separate tables for all regions, it would be interesting to compare the countries on the basis of the greater or lesser proportion of time they allot to each subject or branch. But this is a task which we must leave to interested readers or to those who wish to continue the immense task of research only just begun here. For example, in the case of 'own language', the three countries which would rank first in such a comparison would be Cameroon, Congo and the USSR. To a certain extent, this intensive schedule can be explained by the bilingual objectives of Cameroon and the difficulties faced by Congo in teaching its citizens to express themselves in French. As for the USSR, we are confronted with the distortions of three-year primary education: if the percentage of time allotted to 'own language' in the eight-year Soviet school were listed (as was done in the case of many other countries), the figure would drop from 46 to 33%, which is undoubtedly still high, but not out of proportion. To sum up, this means that any comparison based on percentages — expressed from higher to lower figures, in descending order — would have to take account of the total duration of primary education in the countries concerned. The same would have to be said about mathematics and, even more, about sciences and social studies, which, as we have seen, usually increase in proportion in the higher courses or academic years.

The case of a foreign language appears to be rather special. While four of the six regions devote between 6 and 7% of their time to it, there are two exceptional regions: one giving more time and the other less. The one with too much is Africa, an area where, out of the seventeen countries shown in the table, six introduce the teaching of a foreign language as early as the first year of primary school, usually the language of the former colonial power; in addition to these six there are probably others which consider the imported language as their own language. Others — Madagascar and Seychelles — begin these studies in year II; another two do so in the third year (United Republic of Tanzania and Ethiopia). Rwanda expects to do so in the fourth year. Latin America lies at the

opposite extreme. Only one country — El Salvador — specifically includes foreign language in the primary period, and moreover waits until the seventh year, at the borderline of secondary school, to do so. In the case of the other countries, we are also unable to invoke the distorting effect of short-term primary education since all of them — except Colombia — allot six or more years to this level. On the other hand, all the European countries (Western and Eastern) shown in Tables 10 and 11, in addition to others which are included but to which reference has been made, as well as some Asian countries (Japan, Republic of Korea, etc.) begin the study of a foreign language in the fifth, sixth or seventh year of compulsory schooling, either during primary education — which is most common — or early in the subsequent stage.

In any case, starting with the data set forth here, it would be possible to draw up a table covering not only the year in which the study of foreign language begins throughout the world, but also the relative ages of the pupils. This would probably give rise to new and interesting ideas, which cannot be discussed here because of the obvious lack of space.

The data concerning religious and moral education also deserve more detailed study. In the first place, it appears evident that the majority of countries included in the tables (forty-one out of seventy-four) provide for religious education in their curriculum. There are eight which provide for what is exclusively moral education as a separate subject. And there are twenty-five which, it would seem, provide for neither one nor the other, at least as a separate subject (fundamental principles of morality and ethics are, in fact, included among the 'social studies' of many other countries, but not religious studies). In proportion, the region which refers most frequently to 'moral education' is Asia and Oceania (either separately or combined with religious education). On the other hand, it is the Arab States which, as a whole, pay most attention to 'religious education'. In fact, almost half of the countries which state that they have a subject or branch of 'religious education' are Muslim. The Christian countries with a Protestant majority also usually include this subject, whereas the same cannot be said about the countries with a Catholic majority (this is true of many Latin American and some European countries). As we have already seen, the countries with a communist regime not only do not include religious education, but also do not grant a separate place to moral education, except in one case: Viet Nam. Moreover, it would be interesting to compare these data with the seriousness with which certain countries approach these subjects, especially the Arab States and other countries with an Islamic majority.

3. METHODS, LEARNING TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

Methodological innovations are not incorporated in education systems until a long trial period has given ample proof of their advantages. Didactic methodology has always proceeded, and is still proceeding, with considerable slowness, in spite of the fact that in recent times — especially in the twentieth century — it has perhaps experienced a stage of innovative enthusiasm. In fact, the predominant viewpoint presented by the reports submitted to the ICE with regard to methodology is a fairly traditional and limited one, which in itself is quite significant. The impact of the new technologies on the actual learning process seems to be more like a far-off goal than an imminent occurrence. Evidently, the computer revolution will bring about profound changes in the fundamental principles and forms of school learning. But these changes will not become perceptible, nor will they become generally apparent, until we have crossed the threshold of the twenty-first century. It is enough to observe the general view we are offered today of primary schools throughout the world — and even in the most computerized countries — for us to reject any temptation towards haste or impatience. In this connection, the interesting experiments described in a few specialized reviews are no more than a few disturbing drops in a sea which has for centuries been accustomed to calm water.

In our opinion, what is needed is an interpretation of the movements for renovation which are fostered by modern education systems. There is no lack of sincere desires for reform. On the contrary, all countries are showing a favourable attitude towards permanent renovation, the improvement of methods and resources. But the enthusiasm of former times seems to have subsided. What is now predominant is a feeling of realism. There is now a preference more for correcting details than for undertaking far-reaching reforms. And at the same time there is an awareness that patching up the details always involves, directly or indirectly, restudying their methodological aspects. What Switzerland's report has to say can be considered fairly common.

The renovation of primary education in Switzerland has generally begun, in most cantons, with a revision of the subjects taught. At the same time, it was quickly seen that it was necessary to replan our teaching methods. It was also necessary to go on from there and realize that some thought should be directed at the goals to be attained[115].

The USSR's report notes something similar, although it intimates that revision can and often does begin with readjustments of objectives, together with the replacement of subjects[116]. What is certain is that methodological renovation is an inherent part of any innovative process.

A frequent point of departure is criticism of the prevailing methodological practices. Some reports, especially from recently independent countries,

emphasize the difficulty of making any significant changes without undergoing a more far-reaching transformation of the system. That of Gabon, for example, describes the lack of interest which pupils show towards a school which does not satisfy either their needs or their expectations, and explains that:

... as far as means are concerned, there are various factors responsible for this situation, from the lack of material facilities to that of human resources, passing through the inheritance of programmes of the colonial era which ignore local realities and encourage the cultural uprooting of the pupil. The educational practices resulting from these programmes are pompous, dogmatic, repetitive and therefore continue to be largely responsible for the pupils' lack of interest in technical and scientific training.

At the methodological level, it has been found that the large number of repeaters and dropouts in the first course of primary education is due to the fact that all disciplines at this level are still not taught in the mother tongue. The majority of children entering this course are confronted with the French used by the teachers in the basic subjects for the first time. Therefore, experiments are now going on with new methods for teaching language, arithmetic and reading which above all take account of the realities of the environment and the particular needs of Gabonese children[117].

Without referring to past situations, the Nigerian report also stresses the necessity of eliminating certain methodological practices and considers that the renovation of primary education calls for:

... change in methodology used in primary schools to deemphasize the memorization and regurgitation of facts and encourage practical exploratory and experimental methods. The new teaching methods also stress the development of manual skills[118].

The need for better adaptation to local characteristics and the specific attitudes with which pupils start out are also the reason for the reforms attempted in China, whose report refers briefly to mistakes made in the recent past.

Since the downfall of 'the gang of four' in 1976, major reform has taken place in the content of teaching materials, so as to suit the needs of development in modern science and technology and further strengthen science education at the primary level. ... Some teaching experiments, such as the experiments on earlier writing and reading by phonetic transcription, [intensive literacy in the teaching of Chinese], for instance, are conducted on a trial basis, limited only to some regions or schools[119].

Many of the efforts aimed at a better methodology are based primarily on renovating teaching materials (especially but not exclusively textbooks). The reports of Botswana, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Tonga and other countries place particular emphasis on this point. Madagascar explains that, as far as methodology is concerned, the present renovation is aimed at the following:

- putting into practice educational research structures capable of planning teaching documents and school textbooks;
- the establishment of a National Centre for Producing Teaching Materials, responsible for

supplying materials adapted to all schools in Madagascar, and in the first place those for basic education;

- bringing together technicians and other non-teaching personnel for transmitting the ideas which have to be acquired[120].

Pakistan has also planned to create centres for teaching resources in each district, as well as to prepare teaching guides for the use of teachers, textbooks, etc.[121]. The preparation of teaching guides is also one of the methodological improvements planned in Iraq[122].

Integration with the environment is also found in the plans for renovation of a number of countries. In Benin:

As for teaching methods, an effort at reform is being made and the following are being developed:

- the use of methods to study the environment which will integrate education with local realities (connection between school and life, connection between productive work and intellectual work, organization of school co-operatives, exploitation of cultural values with a view to making them a real part of social life);
- political and military, civic, artistic, physical and athletic training[123].

Strengthening links with the environment is evident in the most relevant projects being carried out in India, through community education centres and other programmes such as that for 'Nutrition, hygiene education and environmental health', which is carried out with the help of UNICEF. Also outstanding is the existence since 1977 of a Laboratory for Children's Materials (also assisted by UNICEF), which is trying to invent and develop cheap and effective materials of educational value. Similarly, the report of Bangladesh draws attention to the work of its community learning centres, which are based on an up-to-date methodology connected with the realities of the environment. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea emphasizes the methodological value of 'inventiveness' and the connection between theory and practice.

In the schools at various levels, deep attention is paid to introduce heuristics. Heuristics is a method which stimulates positive thinking of students so that they may gain an understanding of the content of what they are taught, and so greatly helps them to build up independence and creativeness.

These schools combine theoretical education with practical training, and education with productive labour so that students may digest what they learned and develop the ability to apply it. Making the pupils and students take part in the organized life of the Children's Camp and the League of Socialist Working Youth and drawing them into social and political activities, this is an effective and practical way for them to apply what they have learned at school to actual conditions[124].

Another obvious tendency in current methodological planning, especially in countries with a rich educational tradition, is based on a certain criticism of what in recent times has been a fundamental methodological belief: the pri-

macy of *activity* and *freedom* as guides in the learning process. The learning of basic skills, as well as strengthening discipline and order in the schools, have now become frequently repeated ideas in response to certain excesses committed in the name of modern education. The fact that in many cases pupils who finish their primary studies lack basic reading and writing skills has led to a greater concern for 'minimum subjects' which should be given absolute priority, with the use of both traditional and modern methods. In this connection, the information supplied by Australia is highly significant.

During the early 'seventies a major reform of the direction of primary education took place at a time when the philosophy of 'progressive education' dominated educational opinion. Progressive education in Australia owes much to the ideas of Dewey and Piaget and has been expressed in terms of 'open learning', characterized by the use of open-space buildings, detailed curriculum guidelines which allow a generally freer environment for teaching and learning and more informal teacher/student relations. By the late 'seventies there were stronggivings among some educationists and vocal members of the community that this approach had tended to neglect aspects of the 'basic skills' and 'schooling to meet the needs of the workplace'. This discussion throughout the educational community led to a reassessment of educational priorities for the 'eighties, kindled by the Curriculum Development Centre's guideline paper, *Core Curriculum for Australian Schools*, published in June, 1980[125].

And after describing several cases of actual achievements in its various states it concludes as follows:

Thus the reform of primary education is essentially a continuous process, but from time to time, major new changes of direction occur. G.W. Basset, *et al.* [(1982) p. 29] summarize the search for a philosophy of primary education and its application to modern primary education[126].

Similar curricular and methodological reforms have been attempted by several different countries as Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, and even by some Eastern European countries. Very typical in this respect are the words used in the report of the German Democratic Republic.

The point in grades 1 to 4 is at present to see to it that the pupils learn to read and write properly and acquire a solid mathematical knowledge, to ensure an optimum development of *all* pupils and teach them in such a way that they enjoy learning. It was under this aspect that the curricula and teaching material for the subject of reading in grades 2 to 4 were revised and reintroduced step by step beginning September 1983. ... Beginning September 1984, revised curricula will be introduced in the environmental science lessons of grades 3 and 4. ... Since 1982, new curricula, textbooks, teaching aids and revised assessing and marking guidelines have been gradually introduced for the subject of German. The main aims are to improve in the grades the pupils' reading skills, their oral and written expression, teach them to write without making spelling and punctuation mistakes[127].

However, all this does not mean that there has been any abandonment of more comprehensive and traditional methodological ideas. The objectives also

these lines set out in the Belgian reform of primary education begun in 1971 (French-speaking part) and in 1973 (Flemish-speaking part) have been swallowed up by later revisions and reforms. The latter still prevails in the V.L.O. project (*Vernieuwd Lager Onderwijs*): 'put an end to the system of separating subjects and courses'; 'individualize and differentiate education'; 'make up for retardation due to the child's social background', etc.[128].

Certain countries refer to more specific methodologies. Thus, for example, Malaysia's report points out that:

Preferred strategies of teaching include the integrated approach and the group method. Through the *integrated approach*, materials for one subject area could be based on the contents of other areas thereby ensuring that the skills and knowledge taught in one are reinforced and applied in another area. The *group method* of teaching takes into account the varied abilities of children. Under this would include such methods as teaching according to abilities within a class, rotation of groupings after a remedial programme and providing enrichment programmes[129].

In some cases, the methods are planned to be applied in terms of a school year or course. For example, in Peru:

... in each grade, the methodology for teaching and learning shall ensure:

- (a) that the methods are adapted to the degree of maturity of the students;
- (b) that they make full use of physical and oral activity;
- (c) that they encourage self and group learning;
- (d) that they make use of the resources of the environment;
- (e) that they are in conformity with the nature of the course[130].

Lastly, it is interesting to point out that some education systems leave it up to the schools themselves to plan their own methodologies. One of these education systems is that of the Netherlands:

The basis for teaching in the new-style primary schools is the 'school work plan', a record made by each school, outlining its principles and goals, the instruments by which these goals are to be achieved and how they are used in practice, its links with local social and cultural institutions, which may or may not provide assistance, and the material and other parameters within which the school operates. The school work plan therefore concerns both the content of lessons and the organization of the school. It offers each individual school an opportunity to define itself in ideological and educational terms[131].

Because of the official nature of the reports we have been using as a primary source, we are unable to infer from them the greater or lesser degree of acceptance which certain methodologies may receive when applied to specific branches of the primary curriculum, methodologies which — like the overall method of teaching reading or so-called 'modern mathematics' — have met with a great response in past decades. The fact that the reports have hardly anything to say about these methodologies shows that they are perhaps now as popular as might have been expected. This is obviously not the right place to

go into the matter in detail. The interested reader can consult excellent monographs which will furnish information about what is today of most interest, methodologically speaking, in countries of special educational importance[132].

4. EVALUATING LEARNING

The task of detecting isomorphisms and differences in the procedures for evaluating learning are more complicated than first appearances might suggest. The reason for this is that there are a number of specific features and more-or-less accidental details hidden behind a general appearance of similarity. To deal with the former, it would be sufficient to draw up a picture showing where most of the countries resemble each other, at least when they wish to do so; but to deal with the latter, there would be almost as many typologies as countries.

To make things even more complicated, the references used here have always been based on the same parameters. There are some countries whose reports begin by stating that their evaluation is 'continuous', but the data they supply suggest that in reality they carry out 'periodic' evaluation, sometimes out of a wish to shorten the time between the tests conducted at present. While some countries interpret 'intermediate' to mean tests held within one and the same year, at the end of a quarter or semester, others list as 'intermediate' tests held at the mid-point or at some other watershed during the entire period of primary education. Something similar occurs when speaking of 'final' tests and examinations. In other cases there is a very wide gap between the official rules or recommendations and what the teachers are actually able to do, subject to all kinds of difficulties.

In view of all this, in the following pages a compromise has been adopted: an attempt at classification has been made but a wealth of detail has been rejected. And since the procedures followed in various countries do not present any fixed or stable patterns, the sub-headings refer more to trends than specific models.

Absence or diversity of rules

In the first place, it is necessary to refer to a large number of countries which either do not issue any precise rules about the procedures to be followed in schools in evaluating their pupils, or else permit the competent regional authorities to issue their own, and often widely differing, rules. The first case, for example, is that of the Netherlands:

In primary education there are no regulations governing the nature and frequency of periodic tests. Schools are completely free in this respect. No certificate of any kind is awarded when a child leaves primary school but each pupil is advised on which type of secondary school he or she should attend. This advice may be based on the results of a national written test in which primary schools may participate voluntarily[133].

The criteria applied in Belgium do not differ very much from these:

Different forms of evaluation are used (continuous, periodical, intermediate examinations, final examination). In every school, the teacher in charge and the principal of the school decide ... about their system for checking their pupils' knowledge and, consequently, about promoting them from one class to another upon the completion of the school year. While certain schools engage in continuous evaluation and have renovated their school schedule, there are also many which give written examinations and grade them numerically. ... In application of article 6 of the Law of 29 June 1983 concerning compulsory schooling, a diploma for basic studies is granted to pupils who have successfully completed either regular or special primary education[134].

Ireland's report is shorter:

There is no national terminal examination or assessment procedures. Teachers are encouraged to monitor performance of pupils regularly. Inspectors in the course of their visit report on school work but do not engage in evaluation of pupil performance[135].

The countries which have a regionalized educational administration usually leave it up to the local authorities (of the states, provinces, districts, etc.) to regulate these matters or not, as they see fit. In the United States, for example, the procedures vary considerably, although there are some points in common and some procedures are more widespread than others:

No national standard examinations are given for the completion of elementary school. In most school systems, teachers evaluate students' progress throughout the school year, reporting such progress by means of report cards and parent conferences, and recommend students passage to the next higher grade, including entry to secondary school. Virtually all students progress from elementary schools to secondary level schools[136].

In Canada, this is also the most common criterion: the evaluation is normally carried out 'by classroom teachers through periodic and continuous assessment, subject to policies determined locally or, in some cases, provincially'[137]. It is also interesting to note the existence of official examinations in some provinces, carried out at the end of certain key periods (for example, at the end of years III and VII), but not so much for the purpose of evaluating the pupils as for evaluating the system, in order to determine the greater or lesser efficiency of the institutions and programmes.

In Brazil, rather than rules laid down by the states, there is also the general provision that 'the evaluation of the pupil's efficiency is the responsibility of the school', which also grants the pupil a diploma for having completed the first grade[138]. Nigeria, on the other hand, emphasizes the differences

between the States, while it explains that 'at present, certification at the elementary primary education is based mostly on continuous assessment'[139], although many schools still hold tests at the end of each year or of the whole period, not to mention the frequent existence of entrance examinations for the primary schools.

India's report also assumes that the states are free to plan the matter for themselves, but adds that 'states have been advised to adopt a *non-detention* principle at the elementary stage of education for strengthening motivation of the pupils and preventing frustration that occurs from early failure'[140].

In Australia, the prevailing idea is that the individual schools should adopt the procedure which suits them best. However, 'different education systems emphasize greater or lesser degrees of freedom for individual schools in relation to pupil evaluation', and examples are given of how the problem is handled in particular states. In Victoria, 'evaluation differs not only across various schools, but also across levels within individual schools'. In New South Wales, 'two formal school reports are prepared for parents each year'. In Queensland, '*periodic* rather than *continuous* assessment procedures ... are preferred'[141]. These cases are sufficient to give an idea of the current variety.

In Malaysia, periodic evaluations seem to predominate, but the schools are not the ones responsible for following one procedure or another. The only important difference is that a national examination is held at the end of the fifth year 'to determine the level of pupil achievement and the kind of remedial activities required before the pupils enter secondary education'[142].

Continuous evaluation as an objective

The advantages of the continuous evaluation of learning have been frequently emphasized during recent decades. Many countries give priority to this method, although it is not always applied as strictly as the idea would seem to require. But many countries include it, if not as the sole or priority method, then at least as an important part of the evaluation effort. For the time being, we shall deal with those which, at least in theory, have adopted it as their basic procedure for evaluating the pupils' performance.

In its strictest sense, continuous evaluation implies giving individualized and permanent — almost daily — attention to the pupils' performance, which excludes the use of tests or examinations as methods of measuring the pupils' readiness for promotion from one year to another. As a corollary, it usually excludes awarding the pupils numerical marks. In this strict sense, continuous evaluation is not as widely practised as the references to it might lead one to suppose, and is mainly used in the first years of primary studies.

seems to be most widespread in some European countries, especially the Scandinavian ones. In Sweden, for example,

The evaluation is continuous in primary education. The teachers give their opinions on the pupils achievements in individual talks with the parents at a minimum once in each term. No marks are given. (Marks are given only at the end of each term in grades 8 and 9 at the Senior Level of the 9 year Compulsory School). Repeating is practically non-existent[143].

Denmark's report, after explaining that there are no repetitions of courses because 'there are no examinations in the primary school', adds that:

Under present law, marks are not given in the 1st to 7th forms, but the schools are required to inform pupils and parents regularly — at least twice a year — of the pupils' progress[144].

In England and Wales, apart from a few areas where selective tests are still given for admission to the grammar schools:

In the primary school, there is continuous assessment of individual pupils — their progress is monitored carefully by teachers and their individual needs are identified and attended to throughout their primary years. There are no certificates awarded at the end of the primary period[145].

Bulgaria's report expresses in similar terms:

The teacher is obliged to check the acquirement of aptitudes, knowledge and habits by the pupils, but he does not award any numerical grades. Control and evaluation must have an educational effect. ... Parents are informed periodically by the teachers about their children's progress. Report cards are not used in the primary school[146].

Outside the European continent, other countries also show great concern with making this kind of evaluation more regular. This is the case of New Zealand:

Continuous evaluation is used in primary schools, which develop procedures to ensure that academic progress and social development is regularly monitored. Teachers use standardised tests, such as the Progressive Achievement Tests developed by NZCER, teacher constructed tests, and their own observations to arrive at their evaluation of individual pupils[147].

The report presented by Pakistan expresses itself more cautiously concerning actual achievements, but with no less conviction:

Officially schools are expected to undertake continuous evaluation and some work has been done in the Federal Government to determine as to how teachers ought to go about the process. Likewise, automatic promotion from one grade to the next up to and including grade IX is a part of policy. However, in different regions of the country the official intentions are interpreted differently. Thus, by and large, periodic assessment at the end of the academic year is most common. No certificate is, however, issued at the end of the primary course[148].

Japan should probably have been included among the countries which let the schools decide which evaluation procedures to adopt. But continuous evaluation in its schools can be considered universal, even if not in the forms common elsewhere. In that country, the usual instrument is the personal file in

which the teachers accumulate data about their evaluation of the pupils so that the parents can be adequately informed at the end of each school year. This accumulative file also serves an important purpose when deciding on a pupil's future school career. Otherwise:

The completion of an elementary school course by individual pupils is certified by the principal of each school. A diploma is awarded every pupil who had completed the six-year course. All children who have completed the course of elementary school go on to a local secondary school[149].

In Latin America, a considerable number of countries are included among the proponents of continuous evaluation, at least in theory. In Argentina, 'evaluation tends to be permanent'[150]. In Peru, 'the evaluation of pupils is carried out in an overall, flexible and permanent way'[151]. In Mexico, 'evaluation is carried out in a continuous way, by systematic observation and occasionally by using objective tests and exercises'; this country claims that the use of periodic evaluations is still supplementary since 'periodic evaluations are made in the light of the data obtained during continuous evaluation and the teacher's judgement at the time of making them'[152]. In Paraguay, 'continuous evaluation is still made on the basis of behaviour traits which are directed in conformity with the objectives. It involves every activity carried out by the pupil (it is all-embracing)'[153]. Honduras used a system called Control Evaluation and Promotion and which 'can be defined as an integral, continuous, accumulative, scientific and co-operative process aimed at determining to what extent the previously established educational objectives have been achieved'[154]. In all these countries, just as in Chile and others, the pupils are normally given the corresponding diploma or certificate when completing the primary period.

We shall now refer to a number of countries which, although they seem to be clearly inclined in favour of continuous evaluation procedures, supplement them in various ways, particularly with a final examination necessary for promotion to secondary education. Perhaps the best example of this choice is found in the United Republic of Tanzania:

There is a continuous assessment system from the time the child is enrolled for primary education. Records of the children on their performance are kept throughout their stay at school. This system comes to its peak in the final year (year seven) when a child is given a final exam known as Primary Education Leaving Examination. It is a competitive examination because it is rated and included in the overall performance record of a child. This examination is prepared by the National Examination Council of Tanzania. In completion of primary education, all graduates are awarded certificates known as Primary School Leaving Certificates. There are no achievement records in this certificate. However, the minority group of the top team are selected for further education while to the majority the education is terminated[155].

Zambia also points out that the pupils' achievements 'are evaluated continuously

uously through observation and periodic tests set by class teachers', and at the end of the whole period the pupils 'write an examination set by the Ministry of General Education and Culture Headquarters'[156]. In contrast to the United Republic of Tanzania, the certificates awarded in Zambia do not mention the progress made.

Sri Lanka's report states in a qualified way that:

Continuous evaluation is the accepted method of assessment of pupil development since 1972. The earlier system of periodic examinations was found to be unsatisfactory. In general pupils are not retained in the same class for more than one year up to Grade IV but under special circumstances students may repeat. ... Although continuous evaluation is the accepted method, certain schools continue the older practice of periodic assessment after Grade 3[157].

The combination of continuous evaluation with a final examination at the end of the primary cycle can be found in such countries as San Marino, for example. In Switzerland, most cantons require a special examination in the mother-tongue and mathematics for all pupils whose school work has been unsatisfactory, but not for those who have gone through primary education normally (except, at times, in order to enter the more restricted sections of secondary education).

There are many countries which, although they have shown a growing inclination for procedures of continuous evaluation, still hold examinations at different times during the primary period, especially at its conclusion. This is the case in Uganda, whose curriculum provides that it is 'unnecessary to have formal examinations before class 4 and that promotion before class 4 should be automatic'[158], but which actually still conduct intermediate and final examinations. The reports of both Botswana and Kenya show the efforts which are being made to have the teachers apply methods of continuous evaluation, but both state that they still give a final examination for the whole period, among other tests. Malawi and Seychelles, which state that they make a continuous evaluation throughout the whole curriculum, not only give a final examination for the period, but also an important intermediate examination, held at the end of year V in Seychelles (these final examinations are given, respectively, after eight and nine years of basic school).

The persistence of periodic evaluation

In certain countries periodic evaluation is actually an important step forward achieved in the last few decades, since before then neither the schools nor the teachers were able to judge to what extent objectives had been reached, even in those cases where they had been clearly laid down. This is the case in quite a few developing countries.

In Burundi, for example, it was precisely the introduction of the collection of marks for the promotion of pupils from one course to another which made it necessary to universalize periodic evaluations by means of quarterly examinations. Cameroon still keeps up the practice of monthly, quarterly, end-of-course and end-of-period tests which are necessary in order to receive the Certificate of Primary Studies. The same is true in the Central African Republic where, in addition to the final examination for the period, there is also a competitive entrance examination for secondary education. Ethiopia describes the importance of quarterly and semi-annual tests, and even daily work in the final grading of each course, but adds that most weight (no more than 60%) is placed on the final written examinations. In Guinea, the quarterly written examinations do not excuse the pupils from undergoing a final test every year (the so-called *composition de passage*). In Senegal, it is, apparently, the bimonthly written tests which serve as the basic criterion for judgement. As far as Mauritius is concerned, its report expressly states the following:

The system of continuous assessment has not yet been implemented. We have, for the time being, periodic tests and end-of-year assessments and tests. Tests are generally meant for older pupils. There is one national examination at the end of the primary cycle. It is the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) Examination[159].

In Bangladesh, on the other hand, there is no test at the end of the five-year primary period, although 'evaluation is made by periodic written and oral examinations'[160], which are mainly given at the middle and end of each school year. Turkey's report supplies a detailed description of its periodic evaluation procedure.

In the primary and secondary schools, evaluation is made on the basis of the marks received in the semi-annual tests. Each semester, a pupil must take 3 written tests and 1 oral test in each subject. . . . The arithmetical average of the total marks from the two semesters is the final mark for the school year. . . . Pupils who do not receive an average mark in certain subjects have to be given additional tutoring and take the remedial examinations. Those who do not pass the remedial examinations must repeat the year[161].

As already noted, most of the countries considered so far in this group issue a final certificate for the completion of primary studies. Others take the view that passing a final examination for the entire period makes it unnecessary to grant such a certificate or diploma. In Angola, for example, in order to be admitted to year V (which marks the beginning of lower secondary education), it is sufficient to produce a report card which shows, in addition to the marks for the quarterly tests, those for the compulsory examination which all children have to take at the national level upon completing year IV. There is a similar examination in Benin, where tests are given much more frequently (monthly), although they are supplemented by the *composition de passage* held at the end of each year. Madagascar holds both monthly and quarterly examinations.

nations, aside from the end-of-year examination and the entrance examination for secondary school. Gabon's report carefully distinguishes between what is provided for in theory and what occurs in actual practice.

Theoretically, the official texts prescribe continuous evaluation. But in practice the teachers frequently resort to periodic evaluations (monthly tests and examinations for promotion from one course to another), where a general average is needed for promotion to the next course[162].

In Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran provides for the satisfactory completion of three tests each year in order to be promoted to the following course, although if the performance is unsatisfactory it is possible to take the remedial tests in September. In addition, at the end of the five primary courses there is a national examination for all pupils. In other countries, like Viet Nam, the semester examinations provide information about the degree of achievement. In China, partial examinations are required for only two subjects — Chinese language and mathematics; the other subjects, again together with Chinese and mathematics, are tested only once at the end of the course, but in any case the two subjects mentioned above are the ones which count for promotion.

On some occasions, periodic evaluation methods closely resemble those of continuous evaluation. This is true in Kuwait, where pupils in the first three primary courses do not have to take final examinations every year and account is taken of their semester averages, which in turn represent the average marks received in each of the months making up the semester. In Finland, the end-of-year examination is required only of pupils who have received unsatisfactory marks in one or two subjects (those who fail in three or more have to repeat the course). Malta, on the other hand, still uses the system of quarterly and annual examinations which, as we have seen, is customary in many other countries.

The frequent sequence of periodic tests makes it difficult to determine whether periodic evaluation, properly speaking, is used in the USSR. Its report specifies that

...from the first school year, pupils are evaluated by means of written exercises (including work done at home) and oral exercises. Examinations are required periodically and the results are recorded in a class performance book. Reports are issued every four months. There is no closing certificate for primary school[163].

This information can be supplemented by the Byelorussian SSR's report, stating that 'if a pupil has poor marks in three or more subjects, he has to repeat the course'[164].

Towards a mixed methodology of evaluation

The trend to integrate different methodologies for evaluating learning ability, and more specifically continuous and periodic evaluation, has already

appeared frequently in the preceding pages. In the following pages, however, we shall consider the case of a large group of countries which seem in some way to be convinced that the best system is a mixed type. It might even be said now that the time when continuous evaluation found support almost everywhere is passed, today we are witnessing a reinstatement of periodic control and even of more-or-less traditional tests.

Algeria, for example, informs us that:

...continuous evaluation is carried out throughout the basic school, although with supplementary periodic (quarterly) evaluations in order to draw up a comprehensive statement of the work done during the period in question. Promotion from one course to another depends on the results obtained in the two series of evaluations. Remedial teaching is organized for pupils with difficulties or problems in school. The results of the basic studies are confirmed by a final examination at the end of the ninth year[165].

Congo and Mozambique list the types of evaluation used in primary education, giving the preference to continuous evaluation. Congo includes, as intermediate tests, the monthly tests, and ultimately the *composition de passage* examinations which is also customary in other countries, and in addition a final examination for the primary period. Mozambique mentions a partial semester control and a final control or examination.

Morocco identifies continuous evaluation with a periodic, weekly evaluation, in addition to quarterly tests and the final examination for promotion to the following course; 'at the end of the fifth year', the report adds, and in order to enter secondary education, 'the pupils are given a standardized examination at the regional level'[166].

In Asia, Nepal also seems inclined to adopt 'various evaluation techniques and methods such as observation, homework, unit tests, quarterly tests and final exams'[167], adding that at the present time the school authorities are free to appraise these techniques and that there is also a test at the end of primary education. Thailand, on the contrary, shows a greater inclination to use periodic controls rather than permanent or continuous observation.

A considerable number of European countries also seem convinced of the utility of a variety of evaluation methods, based on permanent observation of the pupils' performance. The report of the Federal Republic of Germany greatly emphasizes that what is really important is not the measurement of achievement but proof that the pupil, as an individual, has gained adequate knowledge of the subjects and developed his own potentialities to overcome any difficulties he might have. Apart from the case of Bremen, where children are automatically promoted from year I to II, in all the other *Länder* it is necessary to decide at the end of every year whether the child can move on to the next course or whether it is better for him to repeat it. From then on, written tests are gradually included in the basic disciplines, all of these d

being recorded in an informative file together with those obtained by daily observation. This makes it easier, at the end of the *Grundschule*, to provide the parents with information about the kind of secondary education which, in principle, would seem to be most suitable (bearing in mind, in any case, that the first two years of secondary school constitute a 'general guidance cycle' and that further adjustment is still possible). In Austria, continuous evaluation is also combined with periodic controls, although promotion from year IV depends solely on written examinations in mathematics and the mother-tongue. In Luxembourg, the fundamental criteria depend on the work done by the pupil in class, although account is also taken of the pupil's 'homework' and the questions he is asked about it. 'Except for a possible appeal by the parents to the inspector, the teacher is the one who decides whether the child should repeat the course'[168].

France states the following in its report:

During primary schooling, the course teacher makes periodic evaluations in order to ensure that educational action is best adapted to the special situation of each pupil. It is the responsibility of the teacher, in conjunction with the parents, to judge the ability of each pupil to pass from one stage to another of the primary period, which must be considered as a continuous whole and not as a superposition of successive levels. There is no formal examination or test which the pupil has to take in order to be promoted in this way: only the way he proceeds through his school classes determines whether he will go on to the next step or not, i.e. to the following course. Upon completing the middle-term cycle, the course teacher draws up a balance-sheet, for each pupil, of the results of his primary education. A pupil who reaches the end of the middle-term cycle is entitled to enter the first year of the *collège*. If the teacher considers that he must repeat the course before entering the *collège*, ... the pupil's parents can appeal to a departmental commission which will reconsider the case[169].

Other Mediterranean countries take a similar view. The Spanish report considers the system practised in its country as one of 'continuous and periodic evaluation', adding that there is a final evaluation at the end of each cycle and at the end of basic general education. Portugal, for its part, states that 'the evaluation procedure adopted in primary education is that of continuous evaluation', but adds that although promotion from year I to II and from III to IV is automatic, 'at the end of each phase the evaluation is selective'[170].

A similar attitude is also frequently found among the Eastern European countries:

We follow [says the Czechoslovak report] the procedure of continuous evaluation, with semester and annual reports. Promotion from year I to II is automatic. Pupils in II and VIII are re-examined in the case of failure. Pupils from II to VII who fail in both language and mathematics are not promoted, nor are those who fail in one of these basic subjects for two consecutive years[171].

Poland expresses itself in similar terms: 'evaluation of the different subjects is carried out by the teacher by verifying and constantly analysing the pupil's results'[172], but it notes further on that there are semester controls and

reports. The same system is followed in Yugoslavia, it being possible for a pupil to pass from one course to another if he does not have poor marks in any of the principal branches; however, in general pupils in the first four years should not repeat the course, while those in the last three years can pass to a higher course if they have only one unsatisfactory mark. After drawing the reader's attention to the practice of permanent observation and evaluation, the report of the German Democratic Republic says that 'marks are given for oral and written achievement tests, papers to be prepared at home and classroom tests'[173].

One relatively widespread practice among some countries is that of assigning fixed numerical percentages to each of the types of evaluation adopted. This system has become especially common in the Arab States. Perhaps Qatar has the most simplified system: at the end of each year, 40% of the total figure is assigned to the marks obtained throughout the year (in certain months there are daily examinations) and 60% to the final examination. The latter, therefore, takes precedence over the regular control. Other countries prefer to take equal account of both. In Bahrain, 50% is assigned to the final examination and the rest is divided between 30% for daily work and 20% for the test given half-term in the semester. Jordan also assigns 50% to the final tests, but divides the rest differently: 25% for the intermediate examination, 15% for the daily controls and 10% for other activities (work submitted, etc.). Egypt, on the contrary, assigns most importance to the final examinations (30 points out of 50), while it gives 10 points to daily work and another 10 to the intermediate examination. The Syrian Arab Republic has also set up similar criteria, but somewhat more complex and not equally applicable to all the primary courses. This simply means that in the Arab States periodic evaluation is more important than continuous evaluation.

The same is not true in some Latin American countries where percentages are also prepared with a view to final evaluation. In Nicaragua, for example, the final semester test counts only for 25%, while the remaining 75% represents the average of the bimonthly marks, which in turn take account of the periodic controls which are carried out regularly. In Cuba, 40% is assigned to systematic or periodic controls, while the intermediate or partial controls are given 30% and the final test 30% (the latter during years V and VI).

Some additional observations

Among the many conclusions which could be drawn from the preceding account, the most common trend is the almost complete predominance of continuous evaluation during the first years, moving towards increasingly exacting periodic evaluations in subsequent years. We have already analysed

the numerous exceptions to this trend, for example, the practice of automatically promoting pupils throughout the whole period (such different countries as Denmark and Pakistan follow this practice). But it is much more common for promotions of this kind to occur in the first four years, as in Cuba, Sri Lanka and Uganda, to give three examples from different regions. Other countries — including Czechoslovakia — do so only in the first two years, or as in Portugal, between years I and II and between years III and IV. Bahrain, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria are also examples of countries which follow a similar trend, each in its own way. In recent decades, there also seems to have been a considerable decline in the number of countries which hold an examination for promotion to secondary education at about the age of 11. With some exceptions — among them certain areas of England and Wales, as well as Jamaica and Guyana — the normal practice is that, if there is a selective examination for admission to secondary education (or any of its variants), this examination is held at later ages. Moreover, many countries do not require any test between these two levels.

Although most of the reports supply only the information already referred to, some of them do furnish data about the specific methodology used in evaluation. Thus, for example, there are quite a few references to diagnostic or initial evaluation (certain reports prefer the term 'pre-test'), to formative evaluation and to overall evaluation. Explanations of this kind are found, for example, in the reports of Argentina, Canada, Guyana, Peru, the Republic of Korea and Switzerland.

Lastly, we should like to refer briefly to the kind of marks used to describe school performance, especially for the purpose of informing the pupils themselves and their parents. Without any doubt, there has been a growing tendency to express the degree of performance in conceptual, qualitative and non-numerical terms. However, it is still very frequently expressed in figures, and this deep-rooted custom does not seem likely to disappear. Moreover, the numerical descriptions used are of a fairly local nature, more or less peculiar to each country, especially when there are relatively common criteria in certain areas or regions. Today, perhaps the most commonly used numerical descriptions are those from 1 to 5. Nevertheless, the use of this scale does vary in different countries. In the German Democratic Republic, performance is graded in descending order, 5 being the lowest mark and 1 the highest. Many Latin American countries also use this scale, but in an inverse order (this is the case in Colombia, Honduras, Panama and Paraguay). This criterion is also used by certain, especially Eastern, European countries such as Poland, the USSR and Yugoslavia. But we should note that the figures indicating a pass grade sometimes do not coincide: in the USSR and Poland, a 2 is distinctly unsatisfactory, while in Yugoslavia it is satisfactory or at least one of approval.

The latter case also exists in Turkey. The scale from 1 to 10 has also been popular but is today on the decline, especially at the primary level. Finland and Romania are two examples where it is still used. Less common is the scale used in Kenya, which ranges from 1 to 12 (12 being the highest mark). On the other hand, a more widespread scale goes from 0 to 20 points (this is used by, among others, Angola, Mozambique and the Islamic Republic of Iran). In Nicaragua, depending on individual cases, teachers use the scale of 0 to 10 points and that of 0 to 100 points. With regard to this numerical grading, there is a fairly general tendency not to use the lowest figures except in very exceptional cases. In Finland, for example, 4 is the only number used to describe unsatisfactory performance; in the USSR, it is very exceptional to use a number below 4.

There are quite a few countries which prefer to use letters (A, B, C, D and so on, from highest to lowest), a practice fairly widespread in the United States. Others avoid even this and give descriptive adjectives (excellent, very good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, etc.). And there are even some which consider even this as going too far and prefer to inform the parents orally in less stereotyped or schematic terms. To sum up, we are far from having adopted any unanimous, or even approximate criteria.

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CHAPTER IV

The professional staff in primary education

1. THE SITUATION OF TEACHING STAFF

'It should be recognized that the social and economic status of teachers and the level of appreciation of their role are important for the quantitative and qualitative development of education.' These words, taken from Recommendation No. 69 of the International Conference on Education concerning 'The changing role of the teacher'[1] were not directed at primary school-teachers in particular but they do apply to them in a very special way. More than half of the teachers working in today's world are primary school-teachers[2]. Their percentage in overall figures is expected to decline in the next few years — continuing the present trend — due to the quantitative expansion of other levels, in particular the secondary level. However, the absolute number of teachers will continue to be very high and should increase, although there may be a certain decline in the developed countries as a result of the fall in the birthrate. From this we may deduce that raising the economic, social and professional level of primary school-teachers will continue to be an almost permanent challenge to all countries which wish to increase the scope and efficiency of their own education systems.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length on the fact that in many countries the education of teachers leaves much to be desired. The disproportion between what society expects of them and what society grants them has become a topic which is as easy to comment on as it is difficult to solve. To be sure, there has been a strong impulse for positive action in this respect in recent decades, and both international organizations and the governments of many countries have adopted measures which are undoubtedly encouraging a climate of real improvement.

In this connection, the basic measure was the Recommendation concerning the status of teachers, approved by the Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers, which was convened in 1966 by Unesco and held in Paris, with the very active collaboration of the ILO. Since then, a Joint ILO/Unesco Committee of Experts has been periodically checking the extent

to which this Recommendation is being complied with by Member States. The positive influence of this document is emphasized in one of the more recent publications produced by this Committee of Experts:

Regarding the overall results of the three rounds of consultations on the application of the instrument, the Committee's successive reports point to a positive evolution. Thus, governments generally accept the need to assure teachers of a status which is in accordance with, on the one hand, the essential role played by teachers in the progress of education and, on the other hand, the importance of their contribution to the development of man and society. Among the factors which determine the status of teachers, remuneration obviously plays a central role and the Committee has been concerned with this question. However, emphasis has also been placed on moral and professional satisfaction, satisfaction with regard to public esteem for teachers, their recognized role in society and the opportunity to pursue a professional career[3].

Actually, this trend had witnessed many public statements by governments and authorities even before the Recommendation in question appeared. In the Philippines, for example, Article 15 of Law No. 4670 provides that teachers' salaries shall be sufficient to ensure them and their families a reasonable standard of living. Article 92 of the Guatemalan Constitution of 1965 states that the improvement of the economic, social and cultural situation of teachers 'is a matter of public utility and necessity'[4]. In 1966, Brezhnev declared before the XXIIIrd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that 'It is with profound respect and solicitude that the Party and the people treat the Soviet teacher, who gives his strength and knowledge and all the warmth of his heart to training and educating children', adding afterwards that 'we must raise the role and prestige of our teachers'[5]. Almost twenty years later, the language had not changed very much:

By selfless, dedicated work in educating younger generations, the teacher has earned the profound gratitude and respect of the people. The many millions of Soviet teachers are the pride of our country, the reliable support of the Communist Party in educating young people. The Communist Party is constantly concerned to promote the role, prestige and authority of the teacher in the life of society[6].

During the decade of the 1970s, many specific measures for improvement were adopted in many countries. For example, let us recall the considerable increase in salaries for Spanish teachers after the adoption of the General Education Law of 1970, in keeping with the new responsibilities and requirements imposed by basic general education. In Japan, a law of 1974 established that teachers' salaries should be set at higher levels than those of the average for civil servants, in order to attract competent professional workers and to enable them to devote themselves fully to their task. In Cuba, a 1974 resolution states that teachers' salary scales should be such as to motivate them to improve their competence and to remain in the teaching profession. The Government of the Côte d'Ivoire, faced with a considerable decline in the

recruitment of teachers, took the decision to separate teachers from civil servants in general, by giving them new and more favourable salary scales. It is not necessary to cite further examples.

This effort to increase the status of the teaching profession had hardly got under way when the economic crisis triggered by rising energy prices again acted as a brake in many countries, so that, with a very few exceptions, up to 1986 the real improvements proved to be relatively modest. It is both possible and desirable that the symptoms of economic recovery which became evident, on a world-wide scale, in the middle of the 1980s should help to pave the way for a more promising beginning in the twenty-first century.

Among staff of different kinds and levels, the ones most closely linked to the rural environment are obviously primary school-teachers. In many countries, the *rural teacher* is still the most representative type in the profession. Accordingly, reference will first be made to this immense professional group working in rural areas, sometimes quite isolated.

It is certain that persons who enter the teaching profession frequently come from rural areas and for this reason are accustomed to the way of life of these small and often impoverished communities. In the survey carried out in Congo in 1972, Marie Eliou found that almost 75 per cent of the students in teacher-training schools and other courses for teachers came from rural areas (an even more significant fact if we bear in mind that the author considered an urban area to be any locality with more than 2,000 inhabitants)[7]. Nevertheless, it should also be borne in mind that studies for the teaching profession are generally carried out in cities and that the graduates do not always agree to return to their places of origin. After becoming aware of the advantages of city life, especially for professional advancement, many consider work in remote villages to be unattractive. Basic necessities may be impossible to obtain in such villages: a decent dwelling; basic equipment; communications with towns; a secondary school where the teachers' own children can be educated (with the economic and moral disadvantage of having to send them away from their families to complete their studies).

Factors of a social nature also play an important role, as, for example, the teacher's frequent isolation from his family and friends, the lack of interchanges through cultural, religious or sports associations, the lack of entertainment, and even the teacher's frequent difficulty in becoming part of a tightly-knit social group. As a general rule, the cost of living is often much lower than in a city, but this is not always the case, and, moreover, it depends largely on what one is willing to consider as necessary or normal. While village people can produce food and other articles for themselves, the teacher will generally have to buy them and sometimes, for his own particular needs, bring them from outside the village. The fact that his family is far away or that he has

to send his children to study somewhere else involves considerable expense. Professional factors connected with their work may prove even more harmful, especially for teachers of real ability, such as inadequate classrooms and equipment, the realization that they are teaching children things which are of hardly any interest to them (both for the children themselves and their parents), the impossibility of establishing contact with other colleagues, the rare and not always pleasant visits by inspectors, the lack of books and resources for culture and self-improvement, professional stagnation, etc. — these are factors that constitute obstacles and frequently end by discouraging even highly motivated teachers.

Unfortunately, this description does not exaggerate the plight of the rural teacher, but rather falls short of the real situation in certain localities. Neither are such conditions peculiar to very poor countries. These contrasts between rural and urban areas, as far as the teaching profession is concerned, can be found in more affluent countries, although the terms of comparison used for the teacher himself may be quite different. As a result of the wealth of resources in highly developed societies, the teacher's expectations may be more far-reaching, so that his frustration is more obvious and harmful.

In view of these circumstances, it is not surprising that, generally speaking, there are many teachers who are reluctant to move to rural areas or remain there for any length of time. Almost everywhere, this leads either to a shortage of teachers in these areas or to a practically constant rotation among them, and in some cases to both at the same time. The usual way to correct these deficiencies ranges from applying *coercion* to offering *incentives*, a course which Doering describes as a 'rural deficit model'[8].

Through coercion, certain teachers, who are generally recent graduates from training institutions, are obliged to serve in rural schools, with the result that these schools always have to depend on inexperienced personnel who want to leave as soon as possible. Sometimes there is an attempt to correct these effects by forcing experienced teachers to serve in rural schools for a certain time, if they want to be subsequently promoted to specific posts (administrative and inspectors' posts, transfers to big cities, etc.), but these measures hardly ever yield the expected results. It is therefore necessary to resort more frequently to incentives such as higher salaries, free or subsidized lodgings, frequent opportunities to go on study leave, etc.

The obligation to serve in rural schools is enforced in many countries in more or less clearly defined ways. One fairly common system, for example, is to assign vacant posts to teachers on the basis of their marks in training schools or the result of competitive examinations. In some countries in Eastern Europe, for example, graduates can choose the locality of their post in the order of their final marks; in this way, those ranking last have no other choice than to apply

for the posts which have been left vacant, generally the least attractive and very often those situated in remote rural areas. In the Syrian Arab Republic, all new graduates — with some exceptions — are obliged to pass some time in remote areas before taking up their preferred post. New Zealand applies another system, which is largely intended to ensure that it will not always be the inexperienced teachers who hold posts in rural schools: every teacher is automatically blocked at one specific level of his salary scale if he has not worked for a certain period of time in a rural area.

However, as we have said, recourse to incentives has come to be the system most commonly used, sometimes as a supplement to previous measures and sometimes as the sole procedure. In its most widespread form, it consists of granting salary supplements or subsidies. The many countries which use systems of this kind include Australia (some states), Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada (some provinces), Finland, Hungary, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Scotland and the USSR, etc. Japan, for example, not only pays salary supplements for remote areas, but also grants a special, so-called 'cold zone' subsidy to teachers living in areas which are periodically isolated by snow. 'Winter' subsidies are also granted in two Indian states (Manipur and Nagaland). In Poland, teachers in rural areas receive 20% more than the basic salary. In Turkey, the supplement can be as much as 25%. In Iraq, teachers with a university diploma who offer to work in a rural area receive premiums of 70%. In the USSR, even higher premiums can be granted to teachers who are destined for the more northern parts of the country. Another equally widespread procedure is to provide rural teachers with adequate housing, either free of charge or at very low cost. This is the practice in El Salvador, Kenya, New Zealand, Panama, Poland, Turkey and the USSR. In all these countries free housing is supplied, while in others — Denmark, Hungary, Nepal, etc. — the teachers only have to pay a very low rent. Certain countries grant all teachers — and not only those in rural areas — free housing or subsidies for housing; this is the case in France, Italy, Lesotho, Mauritania, Spain, Zambia, etc. In some cases, whether free housing is provided or not, teachers are granted especially advantageous loans for buying a house: this is done in, amongst other countries, Hungary and the Syrian Arab Republic.

In spite of all these benefits, it is in many cases difficult to attract teachers to rural areas. In the United States, on the contrary, it seems that it is even more difficult to get teachers to serve in the big cities[9].

It cannot be believed, therefore, that socio-economic problems are only to be found among teachers assigned to a rural area. Teachers working in urban areas are also confronted with difficulties, isolation and conflicts. In the first place, other people in cities who have undergone comparable professional studies frequently enjoy a better standard of living. Teachers may therefore be

much more aware of the inferior treatment they receive, not only from economic but also from the social and professional points of view. If they are serving in well-to-do city quarters, they may find themselves more or less cut off from the families of their own pupils, who enjoy a higher life style. If, on the contrary, they work in schools in poor quarters of the city, they are confronted with other problems which are no less serious. From the exclusively economic point of view, the cost of living in the big cities is usually higher than in smaller ones, and the fact that they can see opportunities, entertainments, shows, etc. all around them, naturally induce them to adopt a more pretentious life style out of proportion to the salaries they receive. Some countries, therefore, have provided specific salary supplements for teachers assigned to the big cities (often, for example, for housing). This is done in Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom, etc.

Although, in general, it might be said that the situation of primary school teachers in developed countries has considerably improved in recent decades, in many cases this situation is still far from being satisfactory. A comparison with other professional workers shows that in many places some discrimination still exists. The fact that they find themselves treated less well than other professionals of equivalent education sometimes causes teachers to turn away from their vocation and, if the right opportunity presents itself, to abandon it. It would seem that this inclination becomes more acute in countries possessing a higher degree of development and industrialization.

An interesting study by Pritchard has compared the views which teachers in two European countries with a different degree of industrialization — the Federal Republic of Germany and Ireland — have about their role and social situation. On the one hand, his conclusions show that 'Irish teachers have more favourable perceptions of their position in society than do German teachers'; in other words, the Irish teachers 'appear to be more satisfied than German teachers with teaching as a career and with their occupational prestige'. At the same time, it would seem that the Irish attribute less importance to professional *status* than the Germans do, and lastly, that 'the Irish teachers have more confidence than the German teachers in education as a means of elevating their social status'[10]. To sum up, it would seem that teachers in the Federal Republic of Germany, in comparison with their colleagues in a less industrialized country, have lost their illusions about their profession and the way to improve its efficiency and prestige in their own professional field. Perhaps it is not relevant to pronounce a conclusion of this kind, but it surely is necessary to point out the perils which advanced societies must overcome in order to improve the teaching profession.

Differences of *status* between primary school-teachers and those at other levels have become less in recent decades, but they still persist in many places.

especially in developing countries. For example, if we compare the salaries of secondary and primary school-teachers when they begin their career, we find that, in Congo, the former earns approximately 60% more than the latter; in Sri Lanka 85% more; in Mauritania and some states in India 100%; in Nigeria 126%; in Nepal 180%; and more than 200% in Sierra Leone, Kenya, Lesotho, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and others[11]. But in general the differences do not exceed 50% and are more often between 12 and 35%.

What ordinarily justifies the differences in salary and *status* between primary and secondary school-teachers is the training they have received, especially the number of years spent in study. In most countries, salaries are determined simply by whether the teacher belongs to one level of education or another. Yet in some countries (Australia, Canada, United States) the only important criterion is the initial training they have received, and not so much whether they teach in a primary or a secondary school. This means that primary school-teachers who are truly motivated and concerned about their professional advancement will not feel obliged to leave primary school in order to get better salaries. In England and Wales there is another procedure also aimed at encouraging the desire for professional advancement: better salaries are given to those teachers who take their degree with honours.

The borderlines between primary education and the first cycle of secondary education have already been examined in some detail. In many countries, the creation of fundamental or basic education, as well as of 'integrated schools', is also helping to bring primary and secondary teachers closer together. But in many cases, in spite of the complete or partial merger of both cycles, the teachers still retain their traditional differences with respect to salary and training, although perhaps in a somewhat less pronounced form. However, when all teachers are performing identical or very similar functions, it becomes obvious that such differences might not make sense. Many trade union or professional groups and associations of primary teachers do no more than make a simple demand for salaries equal to those of secondary school-teachers. But others seem to take the view that the only effective way to bring this about is to require an equal number of years of initial training. Not only teachers but also educational theorists frequently express themselves in these terms. According to Furter 'teachers are divided into classes and strata before commencing duty and perhaps solely on the basis of some very early training which has never been abandoned'[12]. Nevertheless, as a result of this tendency there is frequently a demand for a longer period of training for primary school-teachers in order to bring them up to the next level, while many other specialists consider that the period of initial training is already sufficiently long. On the other hand, up to what point is it practical, and even desirable, to take absolute equality in training as a starting point? Would this mean that no

account is taken of efforts to supplement the initial training level by further studies? It would be interesting to reflect on the following words, which are included among the conclusions of the study carried out by the International Labour Office concerning salaries in the teaching profession:

Moreover, there is evidence of a widespread tendency to narrow the differentials between the pay of primary and secondary school teachers and that of teachers with different levels of qualifications. While there may be excellent social grounds of a general character for such action — such as a desire on the part of the competent authorities to improve the lowest levels or to give the lowest-paid the greatest protection against the consequences of inflation — the erosion of differentials is liable to give rise within the teaching profession to disgruntlement among those with the higher qualifications and, if taken too far, even weaken the incentive to seek higher qualifications[13].

2. INITIAL TRAINING

In April 1985, Unesco held an International Colloquium in Paris on 'Integrated policies and plans for training professional workers in education'. This interesting colloquium stressed the need for change in the strategy usually followed by Member States when planning and organizing teacher training. To sum up very briefly, the important thing is not so much to have good training institutions as to achieve an adequate *integration* of the (no doubt) numerous activities directed to this end. For example, it is not productive to try to raise the level of teacher training unless resources are provided at the same time for raising their standard of living and improving their status in society. It is understandable that responsibility for this whole package of activities cannot lie solely with one ministry (that of education) but must be borne by the whole government.

It is impossible to conceive the initial training of teachers without constantly referring to subsequent and continued in-service training. Actually, the concept of lifelong education is still failing to make any deep impression either in society or on governments. One obvious proof of this is the excessive importance which is still being attached, in the educational field as well as others, to initial training and to increasing the number of years spent on it. Efforts towards a real integration of policies, plans, actions and institutions could open up the way to a system of training teachers based on a much stronger conceptual framework[14].

In the light of all this, it would be preferable not to deal separately with 'initial' training and 'in-service' training. However, this book would not reflect present realities if it looked too far into the future (which is probably not very near) and if it tried to combine activities which are now distinctly separate in most countries. Therefore, the initial training of primary school-teachers will

be dealt with first. And, needless to say, we shall have to make do with a general picture of what, in other circumstances, might justify a lengthy monograph.

The three institutional models

The special theme of the thirty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education, held in 1975, was 'the changing role of the teacher and its influence on preparation for the profession and on in-service training'. In an interesting book based on the work of the conference, Porter gives us a description of what, based on the reports presented and the matters discussed, he considers to be the three main types or models of teacher training: 'direct (or traditional) teacher education', 'open teacher education' and 'school-based teacher education'[15]. Most countries adopt at least one of these models.

The most traditional and widespread model is the first one, which is based on the existence of specific institutions devoted exclusively to this task. Candidates enter these institutions after having completed a variable period of schooling, which today, almost everywhere in the world, includes a minimum of eight or nine years of general studies, while in many cases candidates are required to have successfully completed their secondary as well as their primary studies. Based on the tables provided by Blat and Marin[16], we can sum up the general features of this type of training as follows: the candidates' previous education (primary and secondary) amounts to about ten years, although it can be longer; only in a very few cases is it less than eight years. Candidates have an average age of 16; there are very few countries where the age is lower than 15, while, on the other hand, quite a few countries provide for admission at ages 17 or 18. The average length of institutional studies is three years; the total length of study required of a teacher is approximately thirteen years. Lastly, the most common age at which initial training is completed is 19.

Porter devotes part of his description to pointing out some defects in this first and more traditional type of teacher training, with particular emphasis on its isolation from school realities, its unsuitability for today's educational needs (having been designed at a time when these needs were very different), the vocational immaturity of its students, the difficulty the latter have in changing a professional career which was hastily chosen or which was the unique choice in the absence of higher institutions of any other kind in the vicinity and, from the economic point of view, the rigidity of some institutions which find it hard to adjust to the fluctuations of supply and demand (since the only thing they know how to do is to train teachers, whether they are needed or not). Nevertheless, Porter does not overlook the fact that this type of training, because of its advantages, is still the one most frequently adopted.

Many countries have clearly used the directed teacher education system with considerable effectiveness and managed to emphasize its advantages and minimize its disadvantages. Features of it are bound to persist in any reformed system in the future. However, in its present form it does not represent a genuinely comprehensive response to the challenge of the changing role of the teacher[17].

The 'open' training system resolves a good many of the disadvantages referred to above, and therefore its widespread introduction is not surprising, especially in recent decades. However, while avoiding such disadvantages, it has to forego some obvious advantages. 'The disadvantages of an open teacher education system are that the courses themselves may lack specificity and tend to focus on the teacher's role'[18].

Lastly, the so-called 'school-based teacher education' has perhaps been more the product of necessity than of theoretical conviction, although today it seems to be a valid alternative, and not only for those developing countries which originally adopted it. Those countries, in fact, found themselves driven to solve the urgent problem of making primary education universal, without having either the time or the resources to create dedicated or open institutions. The experience gained in these countries, in spite of its possible defects, has also shown that this new system undoubtedly possesses positive characteristics, especially with regard to the relationship between theory and practice, evidently lacking in the other systems. It can also attract stable and efficient candidates for work in remote rural areas.

Porter's classification will enable us to undertake a very brief description of the present situation concerning initial training institutions. However, since the 'directed' and 'open' training systems are today being subjected to a certain dialectical comparison, they will be referred to together. It was impossible in this book to present a broad and detailed description of all countries. There are many works available to the reader which can provide a more detailed picture[19].

From directed training to open training

From the historical point of view, it is an open question as to which of the two systems appeared first. Yet it seems clear that it was the former that, from the earliest times, was found together with national or public education systems in the sense in which we still understand them today. The famous decree issued by Frederick William I of Prussia in 1717 already included a provision which obliged the authorities 'to concern themselves with preparing good schoolmasters, either by themselves or under their direction by suitable school commissions and pious scholars'. This introduced a long period when there was a firm belief in the advantages of a specific and differentiated education for candidates for the teaching profession.

Another familiar aspect of this same tradition is to be found in the work carried out in France by Jean-Baptiste de Lasalle, which opened the way to the very concept of the 'normal school', later so widespread. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century in particular, the 'normal school' has represented the archetypal institution for training primary school-teachers and its influence can be considered universal. This institution was also widely developed in the United States of America. However, this was destined to be the country where discussion first began as to the advisability of replacing this type of institution by other, more open ones of a higher level, not devoted exclusively to teacher training. The idea that the 'college' or first cycle university institution is the most suitable place for training teachers, together with candidates for other professions, gradually won supporters in theory and in practice. Even university centres, although not 'normal schools', continued to specialize their studies to a certain degree (the 'teachers colleges'), and began to expand the range of their courses by making them increasingly similar to the conventional 'colleges'.

Afterwards, this trend returned to Europe and has had considerable influence elsewhere. In Europe, the United Kingdom gave it very particular attention, so much so that those institutions which were originally called 'training colleges' and later 'colleges of education' gradually resembled universities, especially following the so-called 'Robbins Report'. Ever since then, it might be said that all higher education institutions are in some way related to the topic with which we are concerned. As we have written elsewhere:

This expansive, institutional wave has coincided with a distinct decline in the supply of working posts for teachers, as a result of the decrease in population and the saturation of the employment market. All of which has led to a rapid and inexorable diminution of the 'colleges of education'. A few of them have been integrated in 'polytechnics' or 'institutes of higher education'. Others have simply disappeared. Still others, while keeping their original names, are no longer devoted solely to training teachers, but have diversified the range of studies they offer. Lastly, some have resisted the passage of time and are still doing what they used to, but in another way. While in 1970, there were 164 'colleges of education', today there are barely 75 institutions of any kind left after the changes and different metamorphoses, and of these institutions there are very few which concern themselves exclusively or mainly with training teachers[20].

There has also been some pressure in France in favour of adopting similar measures. Beyond a doubt, the *écoles normales* are still the place for training the *instituteurs* or primary school-teachers. Early in 1982, an official committee, chaired by de Peretti, submitted an interesting report to the Ministry of National Education concerning the training of educational personnel, in which it states literally that what is required is 'the extension and insertion of the different kinds of training in the university world, as well as gradual equality between them'[21].

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the *pädagogische Hochschulen* have been concerning themselves with the training of primary school-teachers as well as those who teach in specific secondary institutions (except the *Gymnasium*). But it seems clear that these institutions are coming closer to the university. There are some *Länder* where the training of primary school-teachers is actually carried out in the university (as, for example, in Hamburg or the University of Giessen in Hesse); in other cases, the *pädagogische Hochschule* is a part of the university and was even the centre around which the university in question was created (this was the case of Oldenburg and Osnabrück in Lower Saxony).

In Italy, important legal provisions enacted in 1973 and (especially) in 1975 provided that teacher training should be raised to the university level. However, for the time being, the functions are still exercised by the old *istituti magistrali*, which resemble second cycle secondary schools with a curriculum lasting for four years. On the other hand, the so-called *scuoli magistrali* still exist, which really are second cycle secondary schools whose curriculum lasts for four years. (Moreover, there are also the so-called *scuole magistrali*, where pre-school teachers are trained.) The institutional model to be followed in the future is not completely clear, but it definitely represents a gradual approach to the university and a probable adoption of methods of 'open training'. In a report issued in 1980, the Italian authorities left the door wide open to experimentation with three different models: the classical one of directed training although at university level; an integrated programme among university studies which is also open to other professions; and, lastly, training of a supplementary nature to enable those who have completed their first university course to become teachers[22].

Other countries in Western Europe have pursued similar ideas. In Sweden the length of training depends on the actual level in the 'comprehensive school' which the candidate is going to teach. However, these institutions and the university have been gradually coming closer together. In Switzerland, there is a certain diversity among the cantons, although in some of them (Geneva and Basel), the teacher candidate has to study for three years in the university. In the Netherlands, as well as in Belgium, there is also a variety of training institutions, with a tendency for them to be at the higher level. In Portugal although the former situation was considerably changed by laws enacted in 1977 and 1978, the training of primary school-teachers is still being carried out in the *Escolas do Magisterio Primario*. Nevertheless, there are projects for making the universities increasingly responsible for these tasks[23]. In Spain the old 'normal' schools were converted into university schools for teacher training by the 1970 Law, although some of them continue to be centres for guided training and their connection with the university has not failed to be

to problems. The trend is towards increasing integration; in addition, some interesting projects are being studied which do not exclude systems of open training[24].

Among the Eastern European countries, the institutional accomplishments of the USSR have exerted an obvious influence. Generally speaking, it can be said that the training of the teaching profession is still almost exclusively in the hands of specialized institutions; methods of 'open training' have been used. As far as the USSR is concerned, most primary school-teachers are still trained in secondary level pedagogical schools (128,300 teachers graduated from them in 1982), although an increasing number have carried out their studies in a university level pedagogical institute. The principal document which directed the reform of 1984 declared that:

...the curricula and syllabi of the teachers' training institutes should be revised and aligned with the requirements of life. It is necessary to have students at such institutes study the fundamentals of modern production and methods of vocational guidance of pupils[25].

This duality of centres is shared by other countries in Eastern Europe. In Bulgaria, for example, the *Institut za načalni učeteli* trains teachers for the first courses, while the *Institut za progrimmnazialni učiteli* is concerned with those who teach at a more advanced level. In Hungary, the *Tanítoképző Intézet* is responsible for training primary school-teachers for three years at a higher level. Yugoslavia has a relatively complex system tending to concentrate the training of all primary and secondary teachers in a single type of establishment, the *Pedagoska Akademij*.

Directed training institutions are also common in other continents. In Latin America, for example, the present situation in most countries does not differ greatly from that ascribed by Oliveros in his 1975 study[26], and is based on the upper secondary normal school. Certain countries have tried different systems, but of the same general kind. Beginning in 1970, for example, Argentina created a few institutes for elementary school-teachers of a higher but non-university level. In Chile, the normal schools are also of a higher level, admitting students at age 18 after secondary school. The same is true in Ecuador and Peru. But, as we have said, 'normalism' is the general rule. The trend towards open training is still in a very early stage and amounts to only a few experiments carried out by a limited number of universities.

The situation in Asia and Oceania is not very different, although some countries are now much more inclined to accept open training. Japan is perhaps the most striking example. In that country, 'first-class teachers' in primary schools have a first-class university degree or diploma (*Gakushi*), while those who have studied for two or three years in post-secondary institutions are considered 'second-class teachers' and those who only have a secondary diploma can choose to serve in primary schools as 'substitutes'. It is interesting

to note that those holding the *Gakushi* can also teach in secondary schools as second-class teachers (where the first-class teachers have obtained a *Shu*, the equivalent of a United States master's degree). To sum up, there is a certain preference for those who have chosen what in principle are 'open' university studies (although there are many requirements for specific professional training).

Another case which should be mentioned is that of New Zealand where, although most candidates are trained in the primary teachers' colleges, many others first choose to obtain a university diploma and complete their strict professional training later in a subsequent year in one of these centres. This calls for a fairly close relationship between the universities and the primary teachers' colleges. In India, although fewer years are usually required for training primary teachers, there is in some cases a fairly close relationship between the specialized institutions and the universities.

Among the Arab States there are also systems of 'guided' or specific training. In Algeria, the *école normale*, a secondary school (second cycle) trains teachers for four years. In Morocco, the institution responsible for doing this is a regional teachers' school, which selects its students from among those who have completed at least the fifth year of secondary education. Egypt also has specialized establishments (*Dur al-mu'allimin*) at the higher secondary level.

All or almost all the African States have specialized institutions for training teachers for primary education. It could be said that there is a trend to consider these centres as higher or post-secondary (and in some cases even university) establishments, but the acute need for teachers forces them to plan specific strategies, to which we shall return farther on.

This is not the right place to refer in detail to the actual curricula of teacher training institutions, whether of the traditional or the open type. In general, the curricula of these institutions is fairly varied, very much in keeping with their respective levels, whether secondary or higher. According to data supplied by the Joint ILO-Unesco Commission, the average time devoted to teaching practice varies between 15 and 25%. At the best, 55% of the available time is devoted to general training disciplines and those which will deal with teacher training.

It should be noted that most countries still have a so-called 'generalist' teacher, i.e. one who is prepared to teach basic subjects throughout the whole period of primary education (as was emphasized in most of the reports presented to the ICE in 1984), although it is also relatively frequent for a candidate to be trained in one specific field (sciences, languages, social studies, etc.).

In many countries, the inclusion of the teaching of a foreign language in the primary school curriculum makes it necessary to have adequately prepared

teachers. Although various solutions have already been tried out in different countries[27], the problem is still very far from a satisfactory solution.

School-based training: relevant experiments

A book published in 1976 by Unesco's Regional Office for Education in Asia and Oceania[28] contained some interesting new experiments with teacher training, together with some more traditional models. Generally speaking, these and other experiments have been stimulated by the urgent need to train qualified teachers as quickly as possible to work in predominantly rural areas. Nevertheless, we must not think that these outcomes are only of interest to developing countries or where there is a serious shortage of teachers. More advanced countries are also insisting on the need to attach much more importance to contact between student-teachers and educational realities. Few countries believe that they have satisfactorily solved the connection between theory and practice in the initial training of teachers. The belief that 'theory must inform practice and practice correct theory'[29] is more or less explicitly accepted throughout the world, but the conventional teacher training institutions do not always allow for a suitable application of this principle. It is very common for directed training institutions to have a primary school attached to them to provide a practice ground for the student-teachers, but there are often doubts whether this traditional solution is really sufficient. This explains the interest taken everywhere in 'school-based training'. The following examples are drawn from situations where there was a need to generalize primary education rapidly and to recruit a large number of poorly trained teachers.

In Nepal, for example, the so-called Plan for the National Education System during 1971-76 called for measures to increase the number of teachers. Among these measures, the so-called Programme of Teacher Training 'in the field' was aimed at those who, for reasons of urgent necessity, had been recruited to do teaching work without any more preparation than their own schooling.

The most remarkable benefit of this programme is that the trainees are not alienated from their actual working situation. Moreover, training is given to the teachers while they are working in their own schools. Daily lessons given in the morning or evening classes to the trainees are put into practice by the trainees in their day-to-day teaching which is constantly supervised by the teacher educators. Thus, they make proper and immediate use of what they learn, and their training becomes more effective, relevant and meaningful[30].

Aside from its expected educational benefits, the programme appeared to be economically interesting, since it was almost immediately able to provide personnel to serve in the schools and did not require the payment of substitutes to replace them during their training period.

Likewise in the Islamic Republic of Iran it was necessary to employ a large number of persons for primary education who had no other preparation than

secondary school. This was the reason for the creation in 1970 of a Teacher Correspondence School which provided specific training for these improver teachers in remote areas by various methods, and especially through printed matter, although also using short periods (weekends and vacations) to perfect their training in the meantime[31].

In Bangladesh, an interesting programme for co-operation in various fields — the so-called *Meher Panchagram Shamabay* — also aimed at generalizing primary education. Women teachers, who had had very little preparatory training, were hired in the locality and given suitable training with the help of competent personnel and by periodic visits to the central office of the project. There was a preference for hiring women, since one of the main objectives was to reduce the lack of female school attendance or to prevent girl pupils from dropping out of school. The employment of women teachers seems to have persuaded parents to allow their daughters to attend school[32]. In the 1980s, an even more ambitious teacher training programme was started in Bangladesh, especially under the guidance of the Academy for Fundamental Education created in 1978[33].

There are various achievements of considerable interest to be pointed out on the African continent. In Sudan, the enormous expansion of primary education has made it necessary to hire people as teachers who have no more than a secondary school diploma. The Teacher Training Institute established in 1961 has carried out important initial training programmes for these teachers with the help of some United Nations agencies (especially UNICEF and Unesco). The fundamental basis for learning is personal study, initiated and encouraged with printed matter, closed-circuit television transmissions, summer courses, etc.

In Nigeria, the Project for the Improvement of Primary Education, launched in 1969, also included a serious effort to make up for the deficient preparatory training of many teachers by hiring some itinerant instructors who are connected with teaching institutions.

Some experiments carried out in the United Republic of Tanzania proved of particular interest. In 1980, the alleged success in generalizing primary education made it necessary to hire many thousands of teachers; provided that they had attended school for at least seven years, young men aged between 18 and 28 were given personality tests and another of an academic type. They were given a programme of initial training for three years to be carried out in their own villages, a programme which required fifteen hours per week of supervised teaching practice and another fifteen hours of personal study, the latter being assisted by distance teaching courses (by correspondence and radio) and supervised by local inspectors and itinerant instructors. Provision was also made for some short periods of intensive training in the teaching

training centres. In spite of the difficulties met with and some deficiencies of a qualitative nature, the experiment proved very useful so that even the traditional teacher training institutions have adopted some features of this new approach.

Other very interesting experiments in this connection are, for example, those conducted through the IPAR project in Eastern Cameroon[34], or the Bunumbo Project in Sierra Leone[35], both inspired by the idea of training a new type of 'community teacher' closely connected with the development of local life.

Some of the more advanced countries have also thought up programmes of 'school-based training' with a view to better adapting future teachers to largely rural or remote surroundings. This is the case with the well-known BUNTEP Project (Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Project) carried out in northern Canada to recruit and train local teachers — especially women[36].

Interesting experiments in other countries have been described in various publications[37].

Here we undoubtedly find ourselves in a field where it is hard to separate the work of 'initial' training from that of 'in-service' training. Moreover, projects for strengthening this particular approach to initial teacher training seem to be gaining ground in various countries. As one example among others, the project now under study in Spain by the National University of Distance Education (UNED) aims at goals of a qualitative and non-quantitative character (since the number of candidates for primary school teaching in this country is very much greater than those really needed). The Spanish UNED is planning some studies based on the work of a selection of students in various schools who have been assisted with distance teaching techniques (printed matter, radio, video tapes, etc.), individual help by tutors and short periods of intensive training.

3. LIFELONG TRAINING

The model of 'school-based training' shows how inadequate it is to speak of 'in-service training' when referring to teacher training activities subsequent to the period of initial training. As we have seen, initial training can also be carried out 'in service' in the field. Therefore, when referring to this permanent task of updating and improvement which is so necessary for teachers, it is better to use the expression 'continuous training', while not forgetting that this too can lead to misunderstandings.

In fact, continuous teacher training can be understood as a form of 'supplementary' education, i.e. aimed at making up for the deficiencies of previous

training; it can also be understood as 'complementary' training which adds new subjects and skills for better integrating the teacher in certain environments; it should also be viewed as 'recurrent' training, carried out at specified intervals (every three or four years, for example). Continuous training can, in fact does, include all these meanings, but cannot be exclusively identified with any of them.

Efforts to make primary education universal have led many developing countries to set up systems of accelerated teacher training or purely improvised 'on-the-job' training. Others have thought to go farther by introducing more stable training establishments, but based on scarce resources and in the face of a fairly widespread lack of interest on the part of the teachers. It has been very rightly said that:

It would be illusory, however, to believe that the provision of training alone, particularly of the once-and-for-all, 'quick wash' kind, will effect the transformation in teacher quality which is demanded if standards are to be maintained through the period of expansion. Although some countries — Bangladesh, Singapore and Hong Kong, for instance — have planned systematic rolling programmes of inservice training to reach all teachers, implementation has proved problematic, and even such programmes may prove inadequate. There is a complex relationship between the availability of training, the motivation to take advantage of it and the opportunities to apply its results in the schools[38].

It is only possible to obtain stable, positive results in the continuous training of educators if the three facets of training indicated above are present and interrelated at the same time. The various institutions which have been set up in many countries have usually been based on only one of these conditions, but in the long run they have come to realize that their stability depends largely on taking the other two into consideration as well. The method most commonly practised has been to set up national or regional centres for the sole or principal purpose of providing further training for teachers, but it is quite obvious that many of them have not achieved the expected results, while some of them have even finally closed their doors.

Among the institutional models which have proved most successful, we must obviously include Denmark's School of Educational Studies (*DLH-Danmarks Lærerhøjskole*), one of the few centres in the world which is exclusively concerned with continuous teacher training. Founded in 1956, it is defined in the 1963 law:

The Royal Danish School of Educational Studies has the responsibility of providing further education for teachers from the primary schools and teacher training colleges and others who professionally are on an equal footing with them as well as of developing and utilizing scientific research with special reference to the school[39].

It is interesting to read the last phrase, where there is an obvious concern to apply the results of research to educational activity. It is believed that this feature is one of those which have contributed most to the success of

institution. But we must also bear in mind two other important reasons for its success, which are mentioned by Lawton.

- (a) It offers a wide range of courses which are planned to suit part-time as well as full-time students with a variety of needs.
- (b) DLH makes considerable efforts to react to teachers' opinions, including formal and informal liason with the teachers' unions, in order to give teachers the kind of professional help needed in changing educational contexts[40].

Here reference is made to the two remaining conditions: the existence of different methods of continuous training; and the motivation of the teachers to satisfy their own needs.

The Danish experiment is undoubtedly an attractive one, but the model it advocates has met with little response in other regions. It is very hard to find institutions which are designed exclusively with a view to continuous training. The Educational Institute established in Singapore in 1973 has since carried out interesting activities along these lines, but is also concerned with initial training and other aspects. National educational centres have been created in some countries with a view to training teachers, but the scope of their activities is not as clearly defined as that of the Danish institution. In any case, the connection between research work and continuous training is obvious in such institutions as the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Canada), the Moscow Pedagogical Institute, the 'Samodumov' Scientific Research Institute (Bulgaria), etc. More closely connected with teacher training, especially when understood as complementary, are certain centres such as the Sudanese In-service Training Institute or the Rural Educational Institute in Cameroon. Many universities throughout the world also contain centres which are wholly or partly concerned with continuous teacher training. But, as Porter says, 'The danger of recreating pedagogical centres as élite and separate establishments remote from contemporary issues is a real one'[41]. The same might be said of the very many programmes of continuous training, in any of its forms, which have been organized by central, regional or local educational authorities in different countries. It frequently happens that the available courses and training facilities encouraged by the authorities — from the top down — do not succeed in arousing the teachers' interest; in many cases they attend them simply to obtain some certificate which will help them to meet certain requirements or to enter certain posts, but not out of a genuine desire for professional improvement.

This is probably the main reason which has stimulated a search for different approaches in quite a few countries. In this connection, the teachers' centres in the United Kingdom have had a considerable influence, especially in the last decade. The basic idea is that responsibility for training activities should rest on the shoulders of the trainees themselves. Accordingly, movements for

educational renovation, teachers' clubs and other organizations have been springing up in many places, occasionally sponsored by private individuals with greater or lesser support by trade unions, political parties, local or national authorities. This movement has been swelled not only by English-speaking countries, such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States, but also by quite a few with different cultural traditions. The influence of the English model is obvious, for example, in the *centros de profesores* created in Spain since 1982. These institutions, which have even adopted the English name, were established by the national authorities and have been granted all the teacher training resources which were previously granted to university institutes of educational sciences and the now defunct National Institute of Educational Sciences. But a similar influence can also be seen in the Italian IRRS (Istituti regionali di ricerca, sperimentazione e aggiornamento educativo) and the Greek SELDE (specifically concerned with the in-service training of primary school-teachers) and even in the *missions académiques à la formation* established in France since 1981. However, the fact that all these centres are mainly responsible to State initiative places them in a very different situation from that of the English-speaking institutions referred to above. Their future stability is threatened with numerous difficulties, many of them of a constitutional nature. But in any case they have the undoubted merit of having emphasized the paramount importance at the organizational level of the responsible participation in continuous training of the student-teachers themselves.

To sum up, efforts to supply teachers with facilities for lifelong training have increased greatly in recent decades, and the use of new technologies, including the rapidly expanding opportunities of distance teaching, gives reason to expect a promising future. Nevertheless, in this field as in others, we are still far from seeing the application of the idea of a genuine 'lifelong education'. The symptom which perhaps brings this out most clearly, apparent in practically all countries, is the lack of any proper connection between initial training and continuous training during the teacher's professional career. The efforts of some teachers — and even at times of their associations and unions — to make the initial training period even longer clearly reveal the difficulties that the concept of 'lifelong education' has in becoming accepted. To raise the training level of primary school-teachers to a point equal to that of teachers at other levels and that of professional workers in other fields is not only legitimate but even a necessary aspiration if education is to progress and it should. But it is more than questionable whether this can be accomplished by the well-tried method of simply adding more years of study before entering professional life, as has, in fact, been proved by a few experiments which, in spite of adopting the opposite method, have given good results in both developed and developing countries. If professional educators must be the first to

to convince society and the political authorities of the advantages of lifelong education in all fields, it is only logical that they should begin by facilitating its application in their own field. Almost all over the world, primary school-teachers have given proof of their willingness to do this, but they do not always meet with the necessary encouragement.

In a very large number of countries, teachers are entitled to take study leave from time to time on full or partial pay, depending on the nature and purpose of the leave. In several countries, however, study leave — or study leave of certain types — is taken without pay. There are also cases where the period of study leave is not counted for seniority or pension purposes. Lastly, only a few countries state that they give study leave more frequently to teachers in areas which are remote from population centres. According to the small amount of information available, the number of teachers having taken study leave is generally low. Practical difficulties are no doubt an obstacle to the application of rather generous provisions[43].

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CHAPTER V

The democratization of primary education and the obstacles confronting it

1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The survey conducted by the IBE in preparation for the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education, which serves as a basis for this study, rightly pointed out in its introduction that ‘the problem of democratization of primary education can no longer be interpreted in quantitative terms only, since the purpose of democratization is to secure the best opportunities for everyone with due attention to deprived groups’[1]. Therefore, it does not seem desirable in this chapter to concentrate solely on what ordinarily is known as the ‘universalization of primary education’, an expression which is usually interpreted in largely quantitative terms.

In principle, this universalization is understood as having been achieved when the gross percentage of school enrolment at this level has reached 100 per cent, or, what amounts to the same thing, when it covers the *entire* population in the corresponding age groups. However, although this objective still represents a great challenge to many nations, it cannot be achieved by weakening the quality of the education provided. In this field, as in others, quality and quantity are closely interrelated. A primary school that fails to achieve certain minimum and useful objectives, that fails to meet the people’s needs, that fails to interest either the children or their parents, will inevitably end up by losing, in one way or the other, the followers which it has, perhaps with some difficulty, succeeded in bringing together. Hence, any real democratization of primary school must take account of both components, so that this, consequently, continues to be a challenge not only to the developing countries but also to all countries in the world. Of course, it is absolutely necessary not to lose sight of the very different socio-economic contexts which exist in different countries.

Democratization of education should no longer be understood to mean merely providing more schooling to more people. The universally accepted right to education, manifested as a strong popular demand, seems to be understood by the people as a right to quality education. Yet, for countries with severely limited resources, there is clearly no possibility now of providing quality education for all citizens. Therefore the democratization of education no

to be considered with reference to specific socio-economic conditions, treating separately the situation of the developing countries and the industrialized countries[2].

In the following pages, this important warning will be borne in mind, without forgetting that the democratization of education has to be a common objective of worldwide (not only national), scope, and that quite a few of the problems encountered are also common problems. In fact, all countries are obliged to bear constantly in mind what Ingrid Eide considers to be the two dimensions — ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ — of democratization. While the first of these affects its extension, the second is absolutely necessary for its definitive establishment and to ensure the thoroughness of its effects. Once the first of these objectives has been achieved to a certain extent, it will be necessarily to work persistently for the second, since otherwise even the quantitative achievements might be lost. This is the belief, in fact, which underlies the reforms and innovations which are being carried out everywhere, and more especially in the industrialized countries. With respect to the latter, Eide says that:

During the next two decades more attention ought to be, and will be, devoted to vertical rather than horizontal democratization of education. The challenge will be to act along either dimension in ways that also promote progress along the other[3].

In this connection, the developed countries will have to pay attention to the educational problems raised by certain more or less marginalized minorities and groups, as well as finding suitable solutions for the widespread problem of so-called ‘school failure’. These problems are also to be found, in an even more serious form, in developing countries, but it is obvious that the latter will still have to give priority to ensuring that their children actually have access to primary education.

This is the goal which the governments of all these countries have set themselves at present. Nevertheless, this goal is not easy to attain, in spite of the impressive achievements in recent decades. As Phillips wrote:

In regard to the universalization of primary schooling, some commentators have taken up pessimistic positions and it is, therefore, necessary right from the start to ask whether this is an endemic situation not susceptible of remedy and whether the children and youth without schooling do in fact need a standard form of primary education in the circumstances in which they live[4].

However, the general belief is that they do need it, and that universalization could be achieved by the year 2000. Much effort will naturally be required to overcome the important obstacles described in the following pages which will no doubt stand in the way. What is called for as a starting point is a realistic, well-balanced attitude. In this respect, it seems useful to quote Frederiksen:

In spite of an enrolment growth during the past two decades unparalleled in history, the battle to reach universal primary education (UPE) is still far from won for most developing countries

(DC). High population growth and persistent high levels of repetition and drop-out contribute to the elusiveness of this target. About half the 142% primary school enrolment increase achieved between 1960 and 1980 was required just to keep pace with population growth. Repetition consumes about 15% of the DC's primary school capacity and about 40% of the starting Grade 1 drop out prior to Grade 4. Net of repetition, the DC had in 1980 an enrolment capacity corresponding to about three-quarters of their children of primary school age. Without the capacity for new admission almost equalled the size of the population of admission age. Because of high drop-out and repetition, the number of non-repeaters enrolled in the final grade of the cycle was only about half that of the corresponding population age-group. Maintaining present levels of repetition, the DC would have to more than double their 1980 enrolment to attain UPE by the year 2000. Therefore, in view of the present economic crisis, it is likely that many DC will enter the 21st century without having reached this target[5].

Well then, the problem of repetitions and drop-outs is, more than anything else, a qualitative problem which shows the need for a well-balanced approach to the 'horizontal' and 'vertical' dimensions of the democratization of primary education.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

Emphasis has been rightly placed on the decisive influence which demographic factors have on the democratization of primary education. Reliable studies show that, only shortly before the end of the nineteenth century, the world population reached a level of 1,000 million inhabitants. By the end of the twentieth century this figure will have been multiplied by six, but it should be borne in mind that 2,000 million was reached by 1930, in a little more than fifty years, and 3,000 million around 1960.

This latter date is a crucial one for the topic discussed here, for that is when an unprecedented expansion of primary education began on the part of the developing countries. Generally speaking, it can be said that by these dates the industrialized countries had already managed to universalize the primary level. Now, if the declarations and initial efforts on behalf of universalization already existing before 1800 are borne in mind, we have to admit that to achieve this objective has taken the most privileged countries in the world 150 years. It is also important to assume that the number of pupils to be enrolled must at least doubled during this period. These data are enough for us to conclude that even though the developing countries may not succeed in fulfilling their goal, it will be difficult to equal the magnitude of their effort to bring about universal primary education.

What is going to have an especially strong impact on them is the weight of the demographic trends. In recent decades, the developed countries have shown a remarkable decline in their birth-rate, which in some cases (France, the Federal Republic of Germany, United Kingdom, etc.) has fallen below the level

needed to replace the present generations. However, thanks to the decline in the mortality rate and certain corrective measures which have been applied, as well as migrant populations coming from developing countries, the industrialized countries will also experience a certain increase in population, but not large enough to complicate the supply of primary education. This will in no way be comparable to what is occurring, and will continue to occur, in the developing countries, although even in those countries — except in Africa — the birth-rate seems to be levelling off. But, as Coombs has written:

Yet because of the extraordinarily high levels from which the decline began, the developing world will be the great nursery for most of the massive global population growth in the foreseeable future. The facts here translate into equally massive numbers of learners and learning needs in the very areas of the world least capable of supporting their costs — areas most urgently in need of food, dwellings, schools, health care, employment opportunities, resources for development, and an infrastructure for development[6].

However, demographic growth will not be the same in all developing countries. On the basis of middle-term projections made by the United Nations, Coombs explains that by the end of this century Africa will have double the population it had in 1975, and that by the end of the next century it will have a population five times greater than that of Europe (excluding the USSR) in 1975. By the end of this century, southern Asia will add almost 1,000 million inhabitants to the 1,200 million it had in 1975, while China might manage to reduce its present growth and even stabilize it towards the year 2025 (in spite of which it would then have 1,400 million inhabitants, i.e. 64 per cent more than what it had in 1975). As for Latin America, by the year 2000, its population will certainly be double that of North America.

Let us pause to stress the impact which these figures are going to have on the development of primary education throughout the world. Even today, 40 per cent of those living in developing countries are less than 15 years old, compared with developed countries where the figure is down to 23 per cent. By the year 2000, six out of every seven children between the ages of 6 and 11 will be located in developing countries. Commenting on this statistical projection, Coombs emphasizes that 'the enormous educational burden resulting from this overall demographic growth will largely fall on the countries which are least able to support it', while at the same time he points out that, ironically enough, the 'rate of child dependency' in countries with scanty resources is much higher than in the developed countries: '...that is, their population of children (age 0-14) is much higher in relation to the working-age population (age 15-64) that has to support them than in the developed countries'[7].

The reader can get an idea of the past and foreseeable growth, from 1960 to 2000, of the world population of school age from Figure 2 taken from a Canadian publication. Basing itself on these diagrams, a Unesco document points out that:

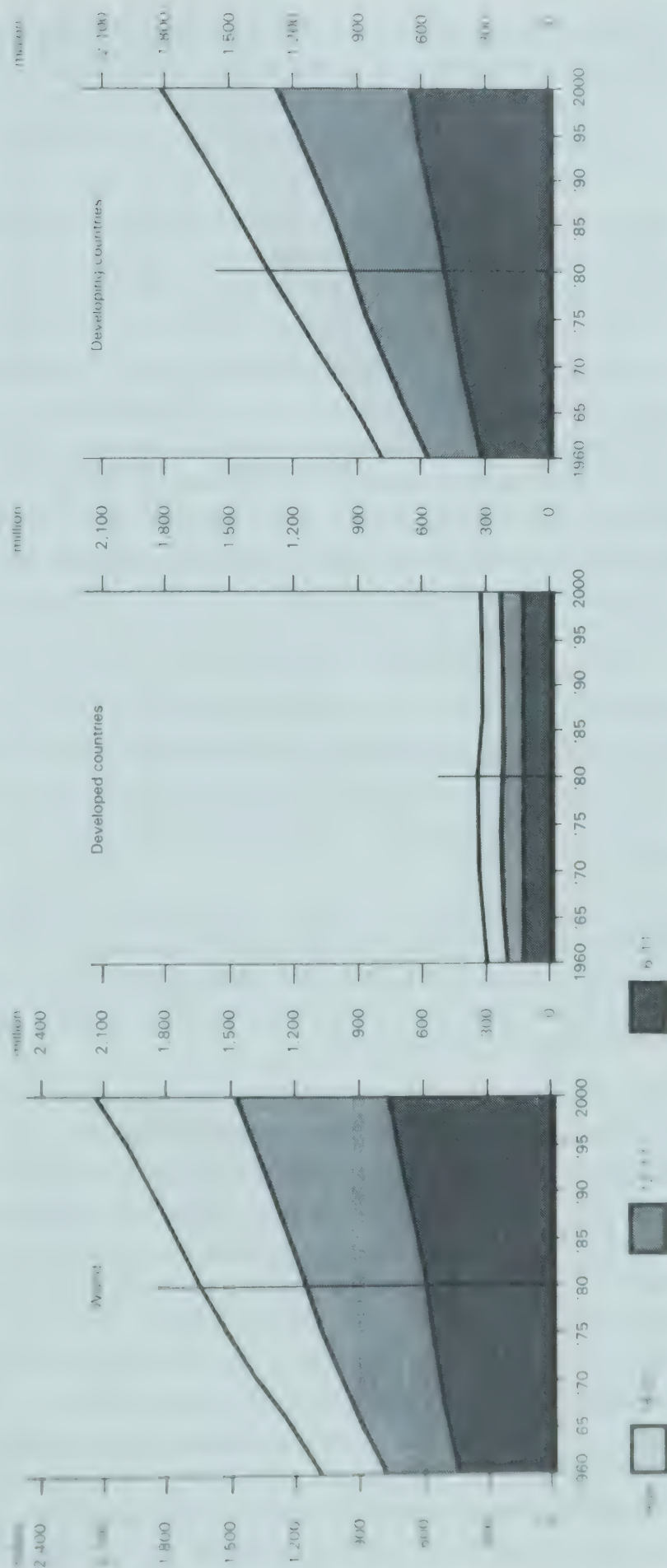
By the year 2000, the developing countries will account for approximately 85 per cent of children and youth in this age group. ... these countries would need to increase their primary school enrolment by nearly 50 per cent in 20 years merely to maintain their current enrolment ratio[8].

But if what is called for is not simply to maintain the present rate of enrolment but to bring about the universalization of primary education for that future time, it is likely that the developing countries, according to Frederiksen's conclusion, must try to double the figure of their present enrolments – a formidable effort, not within the capacity of all developing countries. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that these overall considerations usually conceal important differences between some developing countries and others. Frederiksen thinks that, out of 105 developing countries he has studied, by the year 2000 only sixty-five could reach 100 per cent in their gross rates of school enrolment, always assuming that they can continue making the same effort as they did between 1960 and 1980. Another twenty-three might reach rates higher than 80 per cent, while seventeen of them could not even approach the 80 per cent figure.

In spite of their paramount importance, the effects we have analysed so far are not the only ones which demographic growth can have on the democratization of primary education. Demographic distribution during the next few decades will also depend to a large extent on the migratory movements which are constantly occurring, and will probably increase in years to come unless the existing contrast between city and country is successfully overcome.

In the first place, everyone is familiar with the very great population flow towards the industrialized countries. There has been a constant migratory movement, especially since the Second World War, for reasons of different kinds (including, of course, political reasons). As a general rule, this movement has been from south to north and from east to west. Within Europe itself hundreds of thousands of southern workers (Turks, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Italians, Spaniards and Portuguese) have moved to the more prosperous countries in the centre and north in search of better living conditions. They were soon joined by Algerians, Moroccans and persons from many other African, Asian and Latin American countries who occasionally settled even in places from which other persons had previously emigrated (this is the case in Spain, which in recent years has experienced a large increase in immigrants from Latin America). A continuous mass of people is entering the United States – legally or illegally – especially from Mexico and Central America but also from distant countries in Asia, Eastern Europe, etc. Other nations (Australia, New Zealand, Canada) are also receiving large numbers of immigrants. The big cities of the more advanced countries (London, Paris, Amsterdam, New York, Los Angeles, etc.) bear living witness to the new situation which has been developing. And although, at the present time, we are beginning to see a certain

FIGURE 2. Total school-age population: by age group for the world, and for developed and developing countries — average variation 1960 to 2000



Source: Zsigmond, Z., Devereaux, M. S. *World school-age population: trends and implications, 1960 to 2000*. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1980.

decline in these long-distance migrations, the problems created will continue to call for solutions for a long time. On the other hand, the causes (economic, social and political) which have provoked these movements still persist to a large extent and might lead to the appearance of similar or even greater waves in the future.

Primary education is precisely one of the fields which are the quickest to reflect the magnitude of the problems caused by these international and intercontinental population flows. As one example, it is enough to recall that in 1980 the New York schools had to assimilate more than 40,000 immigrant pupils. On the other hand, since the birthrate of the immigrant population usually continues to be quite high for some time after their arrival in the new country, at least in relative terms, the problem is not merely one of teaching new arrivals. However, it is the qualitative and not the quantitative problems which are the greatest objects of concern to the authorities in question. Among them, we frequently have to include the language problem, which calls for a certain concern about the original language as well as an intensive study of the adopted language. Even when approached in the right way (which does not always happen), the language problem often leads to backwardness and lasting maladjustments. At this point it is unnecessary to recall the resistance played by many parents and educators for ethnic reasons — the origin of many conflicts — which in the final analysis fall on the shoulders of the pupils themselves. Coombs mentions other circumstances which have a powerful impact on educational activity.

Those who began their lives under dictatorial regimes may, within a democratic haven, have learning needs that are as much political as cultural and occupational. Moreover, as a result of the chaotic national situations that uprooted them and subsequent years spent in refugee camps, some may have psychological problems in dealing with their new environment that are incorrectly diagnosed as learning disabilities[9].

As we shall have occasion to see farther on, many developed countries are now carrying on projects aimed at solving the various problems of immigrants at the primary school level, with a view to their better integration in their new environment and, in quite a few cases, at preserving the cultural characteristics of their country of origin. The success of these measures will largely determine the physiognomy of the societies and education systems of the developed world in the twenty-first century. Both of these will certainly undergo considerable modification, although not without some serious obstacles, in the direction of cosmopolitanism and cultural pluralism[10].

Large-scale migratory movements also take place within each country by the permanent transfer of huge numbers of people from the country to the city. The urban population grows without a stop. While in 1925 one-fifth of the world population was living in cities, by 1975 the figure had already reached

two-fifths and it is expected that by the year 2000 the urban population will account for one half of the population of the world. Another important fact is that this phenomenon, which is obvious in both developed and developing countries, is much more pressing in the developing countries, whose cities are expanding enormously even before it is possible to provide them with the minimum services for hygiene and housing.

A few years ago, most of the big cities were to be found in developed countries. According to the World Bank, this traditional picture will have changed substantially by the year 2000: while the developed countries, altogether, will have twelve big cities with more than 5 million inhabitants each, the developing countries will have forty — and those of an impressive size (probably 31 million in Mexico City, 26 in Sao Paulo, 22 in Shanghai and Beijing, 20 in Bombay and Calcutta, 19 in Rio de Janeiro, etc.)(11]. Furthermore, the great urban population centres will contain inhabitants of very different socio-economic and cultural conditions. No doubt the great majority of them will be wretchedly poor, with difficult access to such elementary services as running water or minimum medical assistance, without steady employment — the permanent witnesses of enormous economic contrasts.

As far as primary education is concerned, schools might receive support from the fact that both parents and the pupils themselves would be quickly aware of the imperative need for literacy as a means of subsistence in these cities: after all, one has to know how to read the traffic signs and public announcements; it is necessary to recognize written offers of jobs, to fill in printed forms, to make calculations, etc. However, there are certainly going to be many more temptations to loitering in the streets, trivial amusement and even premature forms of delinquency which soon clash with the imposition of school schedules and habits. To universalize primary education and make it effective in such conditions has never been, and never will be, an easy task.

Nevertheless, it must not be thought that the absolute and relative growth of the urban population will relieve today's problems in rural primary education, especially in the developing countries. In spite of everything, the rural schools in all these countries will also have to enrol a growing number of pupils, with the probable exception of Latin America. Due in particular to its higher birth-rate, the rural population will continue to be larger than the urban one until the year 2000 both in Africa and Asia; while in Africa and southern Asia it will continue to grow (although at a predictably slower rate than the urban population). In eastern Asia, there is expected to be a certain stabilization of the rural population from 1990 onwards.

Only recently has awareness grown of the responsibility borne by the schools for the depopulation of rural areas, resulting in serious and insoluble problems, at least in the short term.

In most developed countries, as in most developing countries, national education authorities impose a strongly urban-oriented curriculum on rural school-goers, as if the chief aim of schools was to prepare them for migrating to the city[12].

There has begun to be a positive, although tardy, reaction to this problem which we have seen before. Many developing countries are working hard to establish a *community school* in the rural environment which will really meet the needs and involve pupils in the economic, social and cultural progress of their own locality instead of encouraging them to leave it[13]. On the basis of the demographic projections to which we have just referred, this effort should not only be pursued but even stepped up in the future. However, it must be borne in mind that this should not be a purely educational effort, concentrated in schools alone, but should be integrated with a planned and collective effort which will include such matters as public health, housing construction, application of modern technologies for agriculture and livestock rearing, utilization of natural resources (libraries, newspapers, lectures), recreation, sports, etc. Hence, because of the enormous complexity and economic cost of such an undertaking, its realization requires especially well-qualified and motivated personnel and, lastly, the difficulties of all kinds which are going to arise while it is being carried out.

It is unlikely that the developing countries can meet this challenge with their own resources alone. All nations should understand that what is at stake is not the special benefit of one nation or another, but that of all mankind. As we enter the twenty-first century, the work of the international organizations as catalysts of goodwill and resources, and as promoters of practical projects, is going to become more necessary than ever.

3. OBSTACLES TO UNIVERSALIZATION

The following pages will be devoted to developing countries which, in spite of the outstanding efforts they have made in recent decades, have still not succeeded in attaining the difficult goal of primary education available to all. How will it be easy for them to attain this goal in the immediate future. As the preceding discussion has shown, many of them will enter the twenty-first century without being able to say that they have definitely overcome the problem. They will continue to be confronted by many obstacles. Among them, it is obvious that those of an economic nature — those resulting from the state of more or less pronounced underdevelopment — are the ones which cause the greatest concern. These are problems which have their roots both in the weak economic situation of the pupils and their families and in the general situation of the country as a whole — which is no more than a reflection of the first problem. ‘Economic factors’, Dubbeldam writes, ‘can be the reason why

certain categories of the population do not participate in schooling. Girls who have to help in the household, boys who have to herd cattle, youth who have to seek early employment to support themselves and their families'[14]. Various publications have rightly emphasized the paramount importance of overall economic development[15]. Nevertheless, it would not be correct to reduce everything to economic factors. Other factors of a cultural and social nature, not necessarily of economic origin, are equally important.

Our survey will begin with the African region. As we shall see, there is now general agreement among countries about the most common obstacles. One of the most complete summaries is given us in Uganda's report:

The main problems and difficulties met in the implementation of the national provisions ... are similar to those being experienced in most of the Third World countries. These are:

- Lack of financial resources coupled with the escalating costs of education. This remains the severest handicap to development.
- High rate of population growth in relation to the available limited resources.
- Deteriorated educational physical facilities.
- Inadequate number of school buildings, and lack of essential scholastic and other educational materials as well as housing for teachers.
- Inadequate supply of trained teachers. To achieve universal education, the present level of staffing would necessitate more than doubling.
- Cultural inhibitory attitudes in the community, particularly those not favouring the education of girls and the physically and mentally handicapped. It should be pointed out that economic constraints tend to entrench these inhibitory attitudes.
- High drop-out rates in primary schools (almost 75 per cent of the enrolled number).
- Rather unattractive terms of service for teachers[16].

It refers, first of all, to the lack of funds, which is undoubtedly the obstacle most frequently mentioned. This is also reported by, amongst many others, Angola, the Central African Republic, Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In some cases, it is felt that this problem lies at the root of all the others. Thus, for example, the report of the Central African Republic says that:

The only [obstacles] are essentially of an economic nature: lack of means for constructing a sufficient number of classrooms, training a larger number of teachers and providing more suitable equipment. This is one of the results of the country's state of underdevelopment[17].

Quite a few countries refer to the increase in the rate of school enrolment (Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, etc.), but even more complain about the lack and inadequacy of buildings, furniture and educational equipment. Angola refers to the 'lack of schools and facilities'[18]; Benin to the 'inadequate infrastructure of school buildings (mostly temporary structures)[19]; Botswana to the 'scarcity of classrooms and equipment, which leads to double shifts'[20]; Senegal to 'lack of infrastructure for accommodation'[21]; this difficulty is especially emphasized by Guinea: 'the only difficulties and obsta-

cles consist of the lack of any infrastructure for accommodation'[22]. In certain reports, the problem of the lack of adequate buildings also includes the lack of lodging for the teachers. The United Republic of Tanzania, for example, states that its main problem is 'inadequate school physical plant and teachers' houses'[23], while Zambia refers to the 'lack of adequate funds to provide enough schools, teachers houses and equipment'[24].

Also frequently referred to are scattered populations in a vast territory, and similar difficulties (referred to in the reports, among others, of Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, etc.). Some refer expressly to long distances and defective roads for communication and transport. Others add problems of a political nature, as does Angola when it speaks about the 'undeclared war which South Africa has thrust on the country'[25].

Especially outstanding in almost all reports is the lack of teachers and their limited training — or both together. Some countries refer to urgent measures taken to relieve this difficult situation. Benin, for example, has had to resort to their so-called 'Young Revolutionary Teachers' and to the 'Bachelors' Teaching Mission', neither of them with much training. Other countries state that, in spite of the lack of suitably qualified teachers, it is extremely difficult to recruit more of them, since a very large part of the educational budget (generally more than 80 per cent) is already allocated to teachers' salaries. Zaire's report refers to this point in especially strong terms:

Paying all teachers' salaries is a mammoth task since teachers' salaries account for more than 75% of the education budget. Employing more teachers means foregoing other educational programmes[26].

Reference is also frequently made to the unwillingness of certain families or social groups to send their children to school. This appears, for example, in the reports of Nigeria, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and others. In some cases (Gabon, Nigeria, etc.) special emphasis is placed on the difficulty of securing the enrolment of girls. It is usually admitted that the lack of interest of parents is often due to the failure of the curricula to adapt themselves to the real needs of the population.

In some reports — that of Gabon, for example — it is said that the enormous effort at quantitative expansion has brought with it a great decline in the qualitative efficiency of the schools.

On some occasions (although perhaps less often than might be expected) some mention is made of the language problem. Some reports describe contradictory situations which usually arise. Thus, for example, while Angola states that an obstacle to the universalization of primary education is 'teaching in a language other than the mother tongue'[27], Rwanda reports 'the scepticism and lack of confidence of some persons about an education which is entirely given in the national language'(Kinyarwanda)[28].

To sum up, the serious obstacles to the universalization of primary education in the African continent cannot be eliminated without a persistent effort on the part of the nations in question and without the united assistance of other nations. Even those countries in the continent which have already achieved important advances find their future possibilities seriously compromised. For instance, Kenya reports the following problems:

- (a) The real value of Government recurrent expenditure, over 80% of which goes to cover teachers' salaries, has declined.
- (b) Due to the increase in enrolments the provision of primary school equipment which is on a per capita basis, has also shrunk from 4% to 3.5% in the budget.
- (c) The rate of expansion of the education system, particularly the first and second levels, has far outstripped the capacity of the Government to provide facilities needed to support new classes.
- (d) As a result of the above constraint, a backlog of essential facilities such as laboratories, libraries and workshops has continued to increase.
- (e) The plan to upgrade the quality of education by providing qualified teachers has fallen behind expectation[29].

In Asia and Oceania we find similar obstacles, although there are greater differences with regard to the degree of universalization achieved up to now. Leaving aside the cases of Japan, Australia and New Zealand, which enjoy considerable educational development, there are countries which have already achieved high enrolment figures (Indonesia, Malaysia, Republic of Korea), while others will have to make desperate efforts if they want to bring about a substantial change by the next century.

Today, the typical situation in many places is reflected in the report presented by Bangladesh:

Manifold socio-economic hindrances stand against implementation of universal primary education as well as compulsory primary education. Most of the children and young boys and girls of Bangladesh are poor. They can hardly afford to go to primary school leaving their parents working in the agricultural field as also other vocations. Once the children are educated they are normally alienated from land and as such many parents do not like to send their children to schools. Inadequate facilities of education in schools and lack of incentives and motivational activities, stand as obstacles against implementation of UPE[30].

Pakistan's report contains a more detailed summary of its daily difficulties, among which it mentions first of all a low and unequal enrolment figure in the schools, with great differences between sexes, regions, and urban and rural areas. Added to this is a high drop-out rate and low teaching quality, since the curriculum is not aimed at meeting the real needs of the population. Thereafter, it refers to the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of motivation among the parents, the shortage of physical installations (buildings, furniture, equipment), the low economic investment in the field of education and, lastly, the lack of any real capacity for innovation[31]. The existing difficulties and the

poor possibilities for renovation caused Mark Bray to pass a rather pessimistic judgement on the immediate future of primary education in Pakistan:

... the population has doubled during the last 20 years, and is likely to double again during the next 20. Because of this fact and the way the whole system is structured, it seems extremely unlikely that by the end of the century Pakistan will even be approaching universal education. This is not to say that policy makers should not set goals. ... But it is to say that no one should be too surprised when the targets are not reached, and in a few years' time postponed yet again[32].

In any case, the governments which find themselves in a situation similar to that of Pakistan are making considerable efforts to change the course of events[33]. In China, the results of the so-called 'cultural revolution' have been fairly negative in this and other respects, and it has now proved necessary to take stronger action so that universalization will be a fact by 1990 (except in some remote and scarcely populated areas). In India, the present situation leaves much to be desired, since hardly more than 65% of children between the ages of 6 and 11 attend school, not to mention the fact that this percentage is considerably lower with respect to the female population. India's report, in fact, admits that the greatest obstacle to universalization is precisely the enrolment of girls, together with that of children from the countryside, tribes and the lower castes[34]. Other countries lay more stress on the influence of economic factors. Thus, for example, the report of Viet Nam explains that 'the first and greatest difficulty is the underdeveloped economy'[35]. Another difficulty frequently mentioned is the shortage of teachers. 'The shortage of qualified teachers', states the Islamic Republic of Iran in its report, 'is one of the major obstacles which restricts the extension of primary education in our country'[36]. For that reason, they had planned to set up a Rural Teachers' Training Centre which would recruit its students from among those who had completed eight years of general education and who undertook to study for another four.

As we have already said, the situation is considerably better in other countries in the region. This is true even in a country with such poor resources as Sri Lanka:

In Sri Lanka the Universalization of Primary Education is a matter of attracting the small percentage of students of primary school [age] who do not enter the school system and of reducing the somewhat larger percentage of drop-outs within the primary span. Since these problems are basically due to economic factors rather than to deficiencies in the education system, it was expected that with the country's economic development these problems would be solved.

This does not mean, however, that there are no distinctly educational problems. As the report goes on to say:

In Sri Lanka there are thousands of Small Schools mostly situated in difficult areas. Small schools have 1-5 grades and lack physical as well as educational facilities. Schools with more than 100 children and estate schools with a meager staff — sometimes one or two — co-

under this category. Children who attend these schools can be considered as disadvantaged. With a view to upgrading the educational standards of these children, a Small Schools Project was conducted by the Ministry of Education with UNICEF assistance[37].

As early as 1983, primary school enrolment in the Republic of Korea was 99.8 per cent, which represents enormous progress in recent times. However, this quantitative expansion has caused a considerable decline in quality:

... there is the problem of a qualitative decline in response to a quantitative explosion in the education field, a decline in the quality and temperament of teachers and the problem of low morale, the problem of restricted educational funding, the problem of out-dated and poorly prepared educational content and methodology, and the problem of differences in education level and quality[38].

Malaysia, which also has a relatively high percentage of primary school enrolment — 95 per cent in 1983 — is likewise faced with problems of a mainly qualitative nature. The same thing is true, to an even greater extent, in New Zealand or Australia.

After years of outstanding efforts, the Arab States are still reporting a number of obstacles. Some of them, like the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia, point to the unwillingness of the female population to attend school, which is particularly evident in the rural environment. In the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, the percentage of male school enrolment in 1982 amounted to 96.2 per cent, but the female percentage was only 77.5 per cent. The report also described the employment of children in harvesting olives and cotton, which necessarily leads to absenteeism from school.

There are various disadvantages mentioned by other countries. Jordan, for example, refers to the lack of school facilities for all children and to the large number of school drop-outs, as well as to the lack of adequately trained teachers. Morocco emphasizes the inadequacy of financial resources, but also reveals another interesting problem: the huge size of the school population in relation to the working population which, after all, has to support them; in addition, the working population is widely scattered. In its description of these obstacles, Egypt's report is fairly detailed and specifically refers to the following: (a) overpopulation, especially in urban areas; (b) the problem of remote areas; (c) economic factors, including the need for child labour in some areas; (d) the lack of buildings and installations, especially in urban areas where some schools have to work with two or three shifts; (e) the lack of financial resources; and (f) the lack of adequately trained teachers[39].

Most of the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean are experiencing disadvantages of a similar nature. Only one country says that it does not have any: Cuba. Its report states that 'at the present time there are no obstacles or difficulties in implementing our national provisions'[40]. Argentina refers to 'basically economic' obstacles. The same is true for Brazil, which mentions the lack of financial resources, the shortage of qualified human resources, the

large number of persons who never attend school and the growing number of such people'[41]. References to financial and budgetary limitations are made in the reports of Chile, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay and Peru. Another obstacle which is often referred to is the widespread dispersion of the population, sometimes in areas which are not easily accessible (Colombia, Guyana, Panama, Peru). Paraguay refers specifically to 'the demographic dispersion and the internal migrations caused by the new development areas'. The scarcity or inadequate training of teachers is another difficulty found in various reports (Bahamas, Brazil, Jamaica, Paraguay and Peru).

Mexico says that the two following are the most important obstacles: 'the heterogeneous geographic, ethnic and linguistic configuration of our country' and 'school dropouts caused by the economic limitations of families, which force children to become members of the family work force prematurely'[43]. Nicaragua expressed the causes which stand in the way of its own effort at universalization as follows:

Lack of sufficient schools, qualified teachers, necessary revisions of the curricula and programmes, the need for textbooks adapted to the purposes, objectives and principles of Nicaragua's New Education, libraries, equipment and educational materials, adequate supervision and the socio-economic problems of the parents of families. To this must be added the continuous attacks [...] which have forced our Government to use funds and human resources for the defence of the country which ought to be devoted to education and other problems of reconstruction. Our Government finds itself frequently obliged to close schools or to transfer them along with their communities to other parts of the country to save them from a situation, which sometimes happens, particularly in the frontier areas[44].

Lastly, it is interesting to draw attention to two obstacles which are mentioned by two Latin American countries. In the case of Panama: the 'unexpected changes in established educational policies'[45]; and in that of Peru: the 'problem of bilingualism'[46]; however, no data are given about the real extent and nature of the latter problem.

All European countries have succeeded in universalizing primary education some time ago and are now struggling mainly to achieve results of a qualitative nature which will give better service to the school population (with particular attention to certain minorities, school failure, etc., to which we shall refer later). However, some countries complain about obstacles of a different kind, which, while not preventing access to primary school, do frequently make it more difficult.

Portugal, for example, refers to the lack of classrooms in certain localities, the poor condition of some school buildings and even the lack of balanced school mapping, while at times there are inadequate roads, transport facilities and housing, as well as a lack of motivation on the part of some rural families, especially to send boys aged between 10 and 12 to school. Many measures

being taken to improve the situation: one of the most promising is the 'preparatory education cycle' carried by television (years V and VI).

Turkey places emphasis on a problem encountered in other countries: the reluctance of the female population to attend school, together with the employment of boys in farm work. On the other hand, it is pointed out that there are 46,000 scattered communities in the country today, of which 2,000 still have no school. Moreover, the quite recent introduction of the eight-year general school adds a new and important challenge to educational policy. Various measures are being taken to encourage school enrolment, including some of a coercive nature (for example, it is impossible to obtain a driving licence without having completed primary school).

Among the countries of Eastern Europe, only Poland refers to certain obstacles which affect the smooth development of primary education. In particular, it is explained that there is no plan for reconstructing and improving school buildings, many of which were destroyed during the Second World War, despite a recent increase in population. On the other hand, there also seem to be difficulties in maintaining rural schools having less than fifteen pupils (calling for better transport facilities, etc.).

Lastly, Yugoslavia mentions that in some of the less developed parts of the country there are persons who think that girls do not need to go to an eight-year elementary school and, in one way or another, encourage them to leave school or stay away from it, especially in the last years.

As this account has no doubt made clear, the obstacles to primary education usually show similar traits in very different geographic, cultural, social and political contexts. Without ascribing all these difficulties to a single cause, there can be no doubt that they are all made worse by a low level of economic development. The question underlying all these cases is the same: to what extent does economic development affect education (and especially, in this case, primary education) and what influence does education have on economic development?

Many countries which are struggling desperately to achieve educational development seem convinced that they will not succeed before reaching a certain degree of economic development, i.e. without an economy capable of bearing the large financial requirements of education. But there are also many which are convinced that educational development is necessary and must come before economic development[47]. Both things may be true at the same time. But in what proportion? It is often forgotten, for example, that the industrialization of Europe rested on the shoulders of a mass of illiterates, under the leadership of educated minorities. It was much later, when a certain economic prosperity had been achieved, that this mass attained access to education; the process took many long years[48]. Circumstances in the world

on the threshold of the twenty-first century are naturally not the same. But this should not prevent us from making an effort to reflect on the history of our achievements, i.e. the cultural conquests of mankind. It is impossible to make projections for the future without firmly connecting them with the past.

4. MINORITIES AND MARGINAL OR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

Even in countries which have already achieved the universalization of primary education, certain groups or minorities often show a more or less active resistance to it. In many cases these are groups which deliberately remain on the fringes in order to resist the adoption of habits and standards assumed by the social body as a whole, even to the point when quite a few authorities begin to interpret this apparent self-segregation as a form of rebellion or maladjustment to which it is necessary to apply corrective measures. The fact is that quite frequently, this is a response to the previous attitudes of rejection which were consciously or unconsciously adopted against these groups by the social body as a whole. From this we can deduce that the solution of these cases may be achieved through revision of the attitudes which have either provoked them or permitted them. An effort at understanding and respect towards these minority groups is indispensable. An effort which should perhaps begin by admitting their existence.

The reports presented at the 1984 International Conference on Educational Statistics show a considerable increase in the awareness of this problem. The majority of countries — many of them with broad educational infrastructures — not only acknowledge the existence of disadvantaged groups and minorities in need of care, but also point out certain measures which are being taken for their benefit. It is easily understandable that some developing countries, when confronted with the tremendous efforts needed to enrol the majority of the population in primary schools, do not feel for the time being inclined to make an effort for particular minorities. In their replies to the IBE questionnaire they only make a few references to handicapped children and the field of 'special education'. But it is less understandable that the same thing should not be done by countries of much higher educational development and where linguistic or ethnic minorities, or simply groups which are economically, socially or culturally disadvantaged, do exist. In some especially outstanding cases there is no mention of the existence of handicapped children with physical, psychic or behavioural problems. In answer to the question about the measures taken on behalf of disadvantaged and backward children, one country's report goes so far as to state literally that 'no group exists with these characteristics'[49]. Another states that 'primary education is accessible for all

no special provisions exist for any'[50]. The Jordanian report states with greater caution that 'there are no disadvantaged groups in Jordan, except in the remote areas where public services are not fully utilized'[51].

However, as we have said, it is more usual to refer to specific cases and to show deep concern. Some reports do this in a general way, without going into details. For example, Norway's national report says that:

A far greater attention is being devoted to solving the problems of the less fortunate groups, such as the handicapped, immigrants, foreign workers, refugees, ethnic minorities, people shut off from the ordinary way of life[52].

That of the United Kingdom explains that among disadvantaged children should be included those living in the slums of big cities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, etc., and draws attention to a special committee, independent of the government, which has been set up to study the roots of the problem and the measures to be adopted: the Research Committee on the Education of Children of Minority Ethnic Groups. In the United States of America the following groups are considered to be disadvantaged: the economically weak; minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians); those whose native language is not English; immigrants; and refugees (mainly from Indochina and Central America).

Further on, reference will be made to some measures which have been taken on behalf of these groups.

One of the reports which deals at greater length with the subject of minorities and disadvantaged groups is that of Australia. The introduction to this problem describes groups which are considered disadvantaged in one way or another:

Although there is no discrimination in access at any level of compulsory education, it is recognised that certain groups within Australian society experience relative social and economic inequalities with consequently fewer opportunities for employment and full participation in society. Consequently, considerable efforts have been made at both national and State levels to discriminate positively in the provision of educational services for such groups. The major groups of children identified as requiring additional services oriented to their particular needs are: (a) Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; (b) immigrants and refugees; (c) physically and intellectually disabled children; (d) girls; (e) children in rural and isolated areas, and (f) children from low income families[53].

However, it should not be thought that the existence of disadvantaged groups is acknowledged only in countries which have a sophisticated educational apparatus. In a country like Bangladesh — whose report begins by stating, as we have seen, that 'most of the children and young boys and girls of Bangladesh are poor' — it is nevertheless admitted that there are particularly disadvantaged children, including homeless and abandoned children, children who are forced to work, etc., especially in urban areas. In this same connection, Mexico's report is equally enlightening: 'the term "marginalized" has been

adopted for all those ... who remain on the margin of the benefits of education and, more specifically, the minority, monolingual ethnic communities (some five groups) who live in remote rural areas or who live in 'poverty-stricken belts in socially and economically marginalized metropolitan areas'[54]. An important step in that country was the creation, in 1978, of the National Council for Marginalized Groups, to study them and provide assistance and encouraging programmes for bilingual instruction, etc.

As we have seen, Mexico's report applies the term specifically to the educational field. The same is being done by other countries, including specific references to primary education. Argentina's report considers that the disadvantaged are those 'who for reasons of distance or their early introduction into working life have no access to systematic primary education or who have not completed the cycles of the primary level'[55]. That of Angola expresses it differently: 'Those considered disadvantaged are the groups of handicapped children and those who for various reasons (old traditions, colonialism, state of war) have never had an opportunity to enter primary school at the normal age of 6'[56].

Algeria's report refers to the effects on education of certain kinds of family behaviour (seclusion of girls, employment of boys for seasonal labour, etc.)[57]. That of Iraq, for its part, seems to consider the special cases of those who were unable to attend school at normal ages, for whom 'accelerated schools' have been established.

Some countries, especially in Eastern Europe, consider that the disadvantaged include children with only one parent or orphans; this is the case according to their reports, in Bulgaria, the Byelorussian SSR and Yugoslavia.

More common are references to groups which by their very nature constitute an obstacle to their own education, particularly those with nomadic customs. Hungary's report makes specific mention of the gypsies. That of the Syrian Arab Republic describes the case of the nomadic tribes that are accustomed to go in search of grassland and for whom the Ministry of Education has provided 'travelling schools' which consist of a classroom and a lodging for the teachers. References to nomadic peoples are also found in the reports of Pakistan, Botswana and Cameroon.

The following discussion will refer to the most frequently mentioned groups.

Rural marginalization

One of the most serious problems at the origin of the exodus of inhabitants from rural areas is the lack or scarcity of adequate educational services, especially at the primary school level. It is explained that for years many gov-

ments have accepted the need to pay particular attention to the neediest rural minorities, which, logically enough, are usually those which are most widely scattered and remote from relatively well-serviced population centres. In their reports, many countries refer to this problem, especially those where the rural economy still plays an important part. Within Europe, we find specific references in the reports of Yugoslavia and Spain. In France, the establishment of the so-called *zones d'éducation prioritaires* is of some assistance to the more isolated rural populations, as well as to suburban areas. The same is true in Spain, where an extensive programme of compensatory education has been prepared for this purpose. In Denmark, approximately 1 per cent of the pupils live on thinly populated islands, and it has become necessary to take special measures on their behalf, ranging from the establishment of small unitary schools, to ferrying them every day to larger islands, as well as giving official approval to certain boarding schools.

Some Arab States also refer to the problem, such as Jordan, as we have seen. In its report, Egypt states that, in fact, the percentage of children attending school in rural areas amounts to only 65 per cent of the total child population, whereas in urban areas, it amounts to 90 per cent. Among other things, the programme to be undertaken in these rural areas includes convincing the parents, who are reluctant to send their boys (and, even more frequently, their girls) to school.

In Latin America, the problem affects most countries, although not all of them refer to it. Argentina has organized the EMER Project (Expansion and Improvement of Rural Education), having mainly in mind these isolated groups experiencing high rates of school drop-outs. Brazil is also deeply concerned about the many families which are lost in remote corners of its huge country. Colombia's report judges that disadvantaged groups are precisely those 'who inhabit the rural area in general and those who are found in frontier areas and in areas of violence'[58]. Chile, Mexico and Peru also refer to the problem.

In Africa, the rural population is in the majority, as we have seen before, but even so there are small rural groups which are especially isolated and in need of help. Very few of the reports refer to these groups (Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, etc.). 'In Uganda, the disadvantaged groups include children in semi-arid areas like Karamoja district'[59].

With a thought for these groups, some countries have developed special programmes of distance primary education. They include Canada and Australia. In New Zealand:

Primary schooling is available in all districts where, with daily assistance of transport, at least nine children of primary age can be enrolled. Others are catered for by the Correspondence School which was established in 1925 for distance education[60].

In this connection, Australia's report is of particular interest:

The problems of school age children whose opportunities are restricted because of isolation from educational services have long been recognized and a wide variety of approaches have been adopted to assist these children. For students who are unable to attend school on a regular basis, there are two main options. Correspondence school and school-of-the-air facilities are the case of older students, an arrangement for living away from home such as boarding schools or boarding in a hostel or private home and the setting up of a second family home close to the school. All States and the Northern Territory have a correspondence school which provides primary and secondary education. ... Since 1977, the Schools Commission's Disadvantaged Country Areas Program has operated on a pilot basis to provide funds to the States to explore new ways of improving the educational outcomes of children in country areas where educational outcomes were particularly low. Subsequently the Program was reviewed and established on a permanent basis in 1982. ... The use of educational technology to overcome difficulties imposed by distance is a new development in the eighties to complement schools-of-the-air. In 1982 a 'loan video' program commenced to lend video-recorders, monitors and recorded cassettes to the families of hundreds of children enrolled in schools-of-the-air, whose homes were beyond the reach of television transmission. When the domestic satellite comes into service in the mid-eighties, educational services for isolated students should be further extended[61].

In rural areas, it is often necessary to increase educational assistance to children, since their parents are sometimes more reluctant to send them to school. Australia's report also refers to this point at length. In Africa and Asia, discrimination between boys and girls is usually followed by definite consequences of an educational nature within the homes themselves. This important point has been brought out in some interesting studies[62], for which we cannot allow any more space at this point.

Socio-economic marginalization

What Mexico's report called the 'poverty belts' of the big cities are the places for the growth of much marginalization in the educational field. This is a problem, which is also doubtless present in developed countries, but it becomes quite extensive in the big cities of the developing countries, such as Bombay, Calcutta, New Delhi, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Lima, Bogotá, Caracas, etc. Countries with high population densities, even if mostly rural, suffer from the problem in a similar way (as we have seen in the case of Bangladesh).

Thailand's report refers particularly to this class of disadvantaged children when it comes to identifying the groups in need of greater educational assistance. It refers specifically to the efforts made by the Metropolitan Administration of Bangkok concerning the suburbs and shanty towns surrounding the capital by creating 'mobile schools' and thinking up various other measures. Malaysia has preferred to direct its efforts against one of the basic causes of absenteeism and school failure: the malnutrition of some of the children.

rural areas. A special nutritional programme in the schools has given good results up to now.

In Latin America, Chile also refers to problems of malnutrition among certain groups of children, which also lead to a lack of adequate schooling. Measures against marginalization seem to be basically concentrated on those groups which are disadvantaged for purely socio-economic reasons. In Jamaica, for example:

Disadvantaged groups are those children from the lower socio-economic levels. ... Provision of welfare services in the form of books, school feeding and one free uniform per year for each child is made for disadvantaged children in all primary schools[63].

Guyana's report also mentions, as disadvantaged groups, those with very low incomes, likewise referring to grants of 'limited aid' for uniforms and other necessities. With regard to this same group of poor children, the Peruvian report mentions that school materials are provided free of charge (textbooks, notebooks, etc.). In this connection, many countries supply school materials free of charge during the primary period as a general rule for the entire child population concerned, so that it is unnecessary to discriminate in favour of the poorest children.

Ethnic and linguistic minorities

One of the best protected rules in democratic regimes is that requiring respect for minorities, regardless of their nature. However, the effort at national unification which many countries have been obliged to carry out has often diverted attention from the aspirations of some minorities dwelling in their midst, which at times has led to their marginalization. For reasons which do not have to be analysed here, the last few decades have witnessed a cultural resurgence of these minorities in many places, especially in those public platforms where it was possible for their voices to be really heard. The aspirations of these minorities have usually placed particular emphasis on their cultural and, where appropriate, linguistic characteristics, to which attention should be paid — beginning with primary school.

In Europe, one of the countries which has tackled the problem in greatest detail has been Spain: the autonomy granted to regions like Catalonia, the Basque country and Galicia includes differentiated planning for their primary education, in which the native languages of these territories are cultivated, as well as other objectives and subjects suited to the locality. However, Spain's report concerning primary schools does not refer to this important aspect. Neither is it mentioned by other European countries which are equally affected by the problem. On the other hand, it is mentioned by Hungary, which gives the following account:

The remaining cultural and linguistic minorities (Germans, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Slovenians and Roumanians), representing altogether less than 3-4% of the population, do not differ from the national attendance rates. Their interest in and facilities for mother tongue education have significantly increased during the last decade[64].

For its part, the report of the German Democratic Republic refers to the Sorbian and the sixty schools in that bilingual area where it is possible to learn Sorbian as well as German, the official language for teaching purposes.

Canada's report refers to the agreement, signed by the prime ministers of the ten provinces in February 1978, by which anglophone or francophone minorities in any of the provinces can be taught in their own language in the primary schools. In the United States:

Bilingual education or other instructional programs to help language minority students of limited English proficiency are also assisted by the Federal government. The government also supplies resources for students living on Indian Reservations through special programs of instruction[65].

In Latin America, there are some signs of increasing concern about the problem of certain monolingual groups which exist, for example, in Mexico, over 50,000 indigenous persons in Colombia, and many other groups of Amerindians in Peru, Paraguay, etc. The problems of providing adequate primary school education for the majority have quite wrongly been used to justify the long-standing neglect of the cultural characteristics and specific educational needs of these indigenous groups[66].

This problem is even more apparent in the African continent, where efforts are certainly necessary but are difficult to undertake, at least in the short term. Some reports make a brief reference to certain aspects of the problem. The Congo, for example, refers to the Pygmy children, who are admitted to schools beyond the official age[67]. Zimbabwe's report draws attention to the conflicts which arose in schools formerly reserved for white children when the authorities insisted that the school principals should not permit any kind of discrimination. It is obvious that many similar cases could have been mentioned.

In Asia and Oceania, concern for ethnic and linguistic minorities is constantly increasing, although the approaches taken may differ. Thus, in Thailand there is a special programme in Thailand to help pre-school children who do not speak Thai, in New Zealand bilingual programmes are carried out with Maori children using Maori as the teaching language and English as a second language, especially in the first years of primary education. This country is greatly concerned about learning and understanding the special culture of the inhabitants of the various Pacific islands so that it can provide them with suitable assistance. In Australia, the National Committee for Educating Aborigines and other institutions are endeavouring to carry out measures aimed at a better understanding of, and assistance to, primary schoolchildren from these minority groups.

In its report, Japan does not refer to problems concerning ethnic minorities. It is interesting, however, to note the persistent and increasingly greater integration of some minority groups, such as the *Burakumin* (village people), for example[68].

... the Burakumin's further progress toward social and educational equality remains to be seen. They are still living in segregated communities, and their membership of a minority group is transmitted through endogamous marriages. There are frequently reports in Burakumin literature that they encounter job discrimination. Nevertheless, their recent economic and educational advancement deserves the careful attention of scholars and policy-makers in nations with minority problems[69].

Immigrant workers

The problems caused by the education of immigrant children, especially in highly industrialized countries, must be studied separately, since they have their own peculiar characteristics. These problems are dealt with adequately in the reports which, in most cases, describe the measures adopted.

In Denmark, where foreign workers constitute 2% of the total population (although, as the report remarks, they represent more than 100 different languages), they have been the object of special attention since 1976 and, whenever possible, have been given their initial education in their mother tongue, while improving their knowledge of Danish. The problem is often to find teachers who have a sufficient knowledge of the respective languages. In Sweden, 'immigrant children get training in their mother tongue as well as in Swedish as a foreign language'[70]. The Austrian report states that they are given supplementary instruction, if necessary, in their native language and additional instruction in German, which is also the ordinary school language in these cases. Switzerland emphasizes the need for those who have special difficulties to acquire a good knowledge of their adopted language and that 'supplementary courses should be organized for them in order to improve their knowledge of the language of their host country'[71]. The same is true in Luxembourg. France has also taken extraordinary measures:

In this field, the French education system is assuming direct responsibility for providing lessons in their original languages and cultures for foreign children, as follows:

- organizing these lessons as part of the *activités d'éveil* or outside the school schedule;
- lessons given by foreign teachers provided by their government;
- practical organization of lessons by the national education authorities in connection with the responsible foreign teachers.

All these measures are taken with a view to opening up the school to a diversity of cultures, in order to encourage a multi-cultural education[72].

In Belgium, there has been a traditional preference for special classes, which are always organized when there is a minimum of ten pupils in question in the school, to improve the knowledge of the language of the adopted country. But

ever since the school year 1982/83 there has also been 'the possibility of organizing intercultural education' in which 'the children of immigrant workers are given instruction in the language and culture of their country of origin'[73].

The Federal Republic of Germany has been one of the countries most affected by the immigration of foreign workers, especially during the decades of the 1960s and the early 1970s. As is only logical, its report is also one of the most detailed which pays most attention to the subject. Many means have been employed, such as organizing classes in the pupils' native language with teachers from that country in question or, when this has not been possible, giving intensive language courses in German or out-of-school instruction in the native language, which often includes instruction about the cultural and historical aspects of the country of origin. However, there have been quite a few difficulties and the report refers to them in the following terms:

There are a large number of factors that make integration of *foreign children with a different mother tongue* difficult in the German school system. The problems originate in the social environment of the family and in the family itself with the frequent observance of strong tendencies towards isolation. Language difficulties and inability of these parents to provide assistance with homework are additional obstacles that may stand in the way of successful primary education. There are a number of public and private initiatives aimed at overcoming these difficulties (e.g. homework assistance, contact groups). However, they can only be effective in specific limited areas and are unable to alleviate or eliminate these problems on a short-term basis[74].

Certain countries, like France, Portugal and the United Kingdom, have had to tackle problems caused by the repatriation or reception of inhabitants of their former colonies. Portugal's report, for example, emphasizes 'the educational experiment of integrating repatriates from Timor, with its effect on the social and linguistic element and while respecting its cultural values'[75].

Countries which have been receiving large numbers of immigrants, and occasionally political refugees, have had to organize programmes on a large scale. This has been the case in Australia, Canada and the United States of America.

Recognition of Australia as a pluralist society with about one-fifth of total school enrolment in the 1980s made up of children from non-English speaking backgrounds has led to modifications to existing programs. For example, the Commonwealth Schools Commission's Migrant Education Program has become the English-as-a-Second-Language Program, recognizing the situation that students receiving support may be immigrants, refugees or their Australian-born descendants. Multicultural education programs in both government and non-government schools in all States and Territories are aimed at promoting understanding and appreciation of ethnic diversity. They include programs to teach community languages other than English, e.g. Greek, Italian. In addition, the Australian Government pays a per capita subsidy, under specified conditions, to classes run by ethnic communities to teach a particular language and culture, under the Ethnic Schools Program[76].

Special mention should also be made of the refugee problem which affects such different countries as the United States, New Zealand and even the Central African Republic. Nevertheless, what has been said above provides an adequate illustration of the problem.

5. SCHOOL FAILURE

It is obviously not enough that the primary school should succeed in attracting all children of the right age in all countries; it must retain them for the necessary time to give them the proper instruction, but for no longer than is strictly necessary. In order to fulfil its task, the primary school is called upon to constitute a fluid and fertile channel along which the pupils can move without restraint, gradually acquiring a useful fund of knowledge, experience, habits and skills. To pass through a pipeline full of holes will, in the final analysis, prove as useless as to pass through another which is full of obstacles. Moreover, the latter are frequently a cause of the former. Pupils who leave the system prematurely and irregularly will certainly discourage others from entering it. Those who are confronted with obstacles which they cannot overcome involuntarily become obstacles themselves which will cause others to stumble, leading to bottlenecks and possibly to breakdowns which are hard to repair.

Without any doubt, school failure is one of the most serious and widespread problems confronting primary schools today. All school systems suffer from it in one way or another. Nobody seems to have found a real remedy for it, a remedy which will not in turn cause other problems or even the same problem at higher educational levels or in working surroundings. A good part of the lack of confidence in education systems and the dismay at large investments in education is undoubtedly due to the present high rates of school failure.

At the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education, held in 1984, Blat Gimeno presented an excellent study on the subject of school failure[77]. The recent data used by him and his very detailed analysis makes the following pages more or less unnecessary. However, a chapter on the democratization of primary education and its shortcomings cannot fail to refer to one of its greatest obstacles. We shall therefore undertake to deal with the problem, if only in a very summary way and with a desire to supplement the study in question with documentary material coming from the Conference itself.

Dimensions of the problem

To begin with, it is probably superfluous to point out that there is no single cause of school failure but a number of them, nor is the pupil its sole victim

since there is a whole group of them. If a child leaves school before the age of 10, he can be no more than mildly responsible for such a serious decision. A boy who, at age 15 or 16, is still enrolled in a course which he should have passed at age 11 or 12 can at first glance be considered stupid, lazy or not adjusted, but there is need to reflect to what extent he himself is also responsible for his situation. From another point of view, if a boy leaves school at less than 10 years of age, this will no doubt harm him first of all, but it will also harm his parents (although they may not realize it), the community, which will be deprived of an educated person and a skilled worker, the State, which will have to invest more funds in the future to save him from complete illiteracy, the future descendants of the drop-out, etc. In the case of a pupil who is kept back in school for several years more than normal, there will be many victims of his prolonged schooling, ranging from the members of his family to the State and society once more (which in the final analysis is the one which has to pay the extraordinary expenses required), including the teachers themselves and perhaps some intelligent child who cannot find a place in school because it is still unproductively occupied by the repeater.

School failure, therefore, cannot be understood as an individual problem but as a serious problem of the whole education system. It is the most obvious proof of the lack of efficiency and profitability of the educational institution concerned. If it cannot be considerably reduced, there will be increased misgivings about investments in education. It is not surprising, therefore, that reports of many countries refer to the problem with obvious concern.

School failure takes various forms, as Blat has written:

The following are to be considered ... as partial indicators of school failure: complete absence from school; premature drop-outs; repetition of courses; and the relation between the number of years of school attendance and the normal duration of primary studies[78].

Complete absenteeism, i.e. non-enrolment in the formal education system, should not, in principle, be included among the forms of school failure, since the term 'failure' cannot apply when there has been no experience whatsoever of school attendance. Nevertheless, some of the causes — if not the principal ones — are the unattractiveness of the school, the lack of interest on the part of both parents and pupils for what the school has to offer and for what it actually does provide. In short, the school or the school system fails from the very beginning to attract its pupils as it ought to do. We have already seen this while studying the obstacles to the universalization of primary education.

We now have to deal with the other two, and better known, indicators of school failure: drop-outs (or premature drop-outs) and the repetition of courses. The relationship between years of actual school attendance and years of legal school attendance does not add a new dimension, but only reflects

particular consequence of repeating courses throughout the whole level; we shall therefore not take any account of it here, except incidentally.

What is obvious, as Blat emphasizes, is the influence of course repeating on drop-outs. In spite of this, there can be, and often are, drop-outs who are not repeaters, because of other reasons of a different kind. There are many cases of intelligent boys — and, even more frequently, girls — who are taken out of school at an early age by their parents precisely because they have proved to be particularly alert or capable. In the following pages we shall deal first of all with school drop-outs, accepting that this problem, while frequently connected with that of repeaters, is much more serious and calls for a more urgent solution, inasmuch as it has a special influence on the rate of illiteracy and frustrates the efforts of developing nations to achieve the universalization of primary education.

Drop-outs

As a starting point, it is worthwhile to examine Tables 13 and 14, taken from Blat's book which had been prepared by Unesco's Office of Statistics.

TABLE 13. Percentage of drop-outs before the fourth school year

	1970	1980
Africa	27	21
Latin American and the Caribbean	30	27
Asia and Oceania	14	9
Europe	6	4

As we see, Latin America and the Caribbean are at the top of the percentages of drop-outs, with the aggravating feature that their rates have not declined as much as in other areas. In their reports to the International Conference on Education, most countries make no secret of their concern about the problem. Only Cuba states that it has no difficulties of this sort, saying that 'dropping out is minimal and is due to sickness and other lesser causes'[79]. Rather low figures are shown by Guyana (an average of 2.71%: 2.84% for boys and 2.58% for girls), and by Panama (2.8%), which is nevertheless concerned about the problem. Chile's report explains that 'dropping out percentages vary greatly in the different parts of the country[80]; while there is an average of 5.6% in the urban state schools, it is close to and sometimes more than 9% in rural areas. Jamaica reports that the highest percentages of dropping out occur almost at the end of primary education, in course V (9.5%), followed by course IV (5.6%) and III (1.6%).

TABLE 14. Classification of countries in terms of survival levels before the fourth year of primary education—around 1980

	Margin of variation	Median survival rate	Number of countries in which the percentage of the cohort reaching the fourth year of study is:				Total
			90% and above	89% to 75%	74% to 50%	Less than 50%	
<i>AFRICA</i>							
Arab States	24%-100%	79%	10	14	9	5	38
French-speaking countries	73%- 92%	87%	3	2	1	—	6
English-speaking countries	39%- 99%	79%	3	7	5	1	16
Portuguese-speaking countries	45%-100%	83%	4	4	3	1	12
	24%- 78%	37%	—	1	—	3	4
<i>LATIN AMERICA</i>							
Central America & the Caribbean	24%- 97%	81%	4	10	4	3	21
South America	24%- 97%	75%	2	5	1	3	11
	51%- 97%	82%	2	5	3	—	10
<i>ASIA</i>							
Arab States	29%-100%	94%	16	6	1	2	25
Other countries of Asia	82%-100%	95%	7	2	—	—	9
	29%-100%	93%	9	4	1	2	16
<i>OCEANIA</i>	81%-100%	91%	3	2	—	—	5
<i>EUROPE</i>	77%-100%	97%	18	2	—	—	20
Total	24%-100%	87%	51	34	14	10	109

Source: Unesco, Office of Statistics, Division of Statistics on Education, *Evolution of wastage in primary education in the world between 1970 and 1980* (Paris, 1984, p. 40. (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 39/Ref. 2)

Paraguay's report shows a rather peculiar situation. In principle, 'dropping out declined from 9.1% to 6.5% in the period 1975-1980. In all these years, the highest percentage of drop-outs was found in the rural areas, where it gradually declined from 10.2 to 7.1%'. However, it adds immediately afterwards that 'school wastage caused by repeaters, drop-outs and failures to be promoted has declined from 71% to 62%', a percentage which is exceptionally high in comparison with the preceding figures[81].

Argentina frankly shows high percentages of dropouts: more specifically, the average total percentage for the period 1976-82 was 22%. Nicaragua explains the situation as follows:

Out of 100 children who entered the first grade in 1972, only 24 completed primary school in 1978, which shows that the loss from the 1st to the 6th grade was 76%, due to dropping out and repeating, it being noted that dropping out was most pronounced between the 1st and 2nd grades, where it amounted to 53.5%[82].

In Mexico, the proportion of drop-outs is close to 45% on the average. It also seems to be particularly high in Peru, although its report does not supply any numerical data except for absenteeism from school (an average of 18%). In the case of Brazil, the figure rises to no less than 84.4%, taking into account the complete period of 'first-grade education' (years I-VIII), but is still enormous — approximately 50% — if limited to those who leave school before year V. Colombia is also among the countries with a large proportion of drop-outs: the national total is 62.5%; in the urban area it is already 45% but in the rural area it reaches the alarming figure of 82.4%.

The causes of dropping out given by the Latin American countries are always very similar. Colombia's report is typical:

Dropping out is caused by various socio-economic factors, mainly the need for children to contribute their labour to the family income from an early age; problems of malnutrition and poor health owing to low incomes; differences between the students' cultural standards and the kind of education offered to them; the parents' lack of interest in their children's education. In addition to the causes listed above, the repeating of courses is another factor responsible for dropping out of school[83].

At times, there are additional factors. Nicaragua, for example, refers to the fact that some families change their place of residence in search of work. Brazil emphasizes the low educational level of many teachers, especially in rural areas, as well as the lack of suitable teaching material, defective organization of the schools, etc.

As for the measures being adopted, almost all of them are aimed directly at eliminating the causes. Paraguay, for example, is making a special effort to complete the unfinished schools in rural areas, to introduce new and more suitable curricula, to prevent repetitions of courses by what is called in its report 'guided promotion', by better adapting the schools to local economies, by training the teachers, etc. Brazil places particular emphasis on this last point

— teacher training — but also adds some incentives falling within the domain of public health, like the ‘school lunch’. Colombia places much hope in the efficacy of the curricular renovation being carried out, one of the basic principles of which is to make the curriculum more flexible ‘to adapt it to the socio-cultural conditions of the different groups that make up the country’. Argentina stresses such efforts, for example, as those made by the ELM Project, to which reference has already been made.

As we can see, Africa takes second place with regard to the drop-out problem, although there has been a considerable decline during the 1970s. In the latest reports, many African countries admit to having high drop-out rates, without supplying precise details (as in the case of Benin, Congo, Madagascar, Guinea, Zimbabwe), although they are concerned about them.

Among those which did not provide complete data, there are certain percentages which stand out, as, for example, that given by Gabon: of every 100 pupils, 68 leave school without having obtained the Certificate of Primary Studies. In Uganda, approximately 50% of those who begin primary education fail to complete it. In Senegal, the average percentage of dropouts is 44.7%. In Cameroon, there are important differences between the urban and rural areas (fairly common in African nations): urban zones, 10%; rural areas, 40%; the purely arithmetical average is 25%. In 1981, Ethiopia had an average drop-out rate of 30% for years I-VI, the same figure as Mauritius. In 1982, Mozambique reached a considerably higher figure than in previous years: 21%, but its report explains that there were special circumstances in that year (climatic disasters, an increase in unrest, etc., which resulted in keeping children away from school). Malawi gives lower figures for drop-outs, but they are still quite high, at approximately 16.5%. In the Central African Republic, there is a variation between 5 and 15%. In the school year 1981/82, Rwanda recorded a figure of 8%.

Some countries do not provide any averages for the period of primary education as a whole, but rather figures for specific years, apparently those in which the phenomenon is most common. Thus, for example, with reference to 1981/82, Angola’s report estimates that the percentage of drop-outs in year I was 25.2%; 24.7 in II; 24.9 in III; and 20.6 in IV. The wastage is practically continuous.

There are also countries which seem to be less affected by the problem. The United Republic of Tanzania does not specify any percentages, but states that they are not especially high. So does Nigeria. Kenya says that it has an average percentage of drop-outs of 3.7 which occur, above all, between years V and VI, and between VI and VII. Burundi states that it has an especially low percentage of 0.65, thanks to the fact that since 1981 there has been ‘collective promotion’ of pupils from one course to another (to which we shall refer further).

Botswana also has a remarkably low percentage; less than 2 per cent. Seychelles, for its part, says that it has no problems of this kind.

The causes of school drop-outs in Africa do not seem to differ greatly from those in Latin America and other parts of the world. Cameroon's report, for example, refers to child labour, the maladjustment of the school to its surroundings and the resistance of parents. That of Madagascar mentions the parents' changes of residence. That of Malawi, the lack of school materials and the poor preparation of many teachers, aside from the lack of classrooms and economic reasons.

Nevertheless, some of the causes we find are of a rather unusual nature. Senegal's report places special emphasis on the discouraging effect of mass-oriented classes with lazy teachers, as well as on the high degree of selectivity within levels. That of the United Republic of Tanzania, for its part, refers to difficulties of a cultural nature as well as another cause of dropping out not previously recorded, at least at the level with which we are concerned, namely, frequent pregnancies. The same report also blames the unfavourable effect of divorces on the problem.

It is important to bear in mind that in many cases dropping out is not due to a lack of interest on the part of the pupils or their parents but to the sheer impossibility of finding places in the schools. Zambia's report is especially enlightening in this respect:

The system has three bottle-necks. The first one is at Grade I level. Many children cannot find places in Grade I. The situation is very serious in the main urban centres where thousands of parents spend a night on the queue in order to get places for their children. Majority of these parents fail to secure places for their children.

The second bottle-neck is at Grade IV level in rural areas, where some schools go up to Grade IV only, children write a selection examination in order to get a place in Grade V in a nearby school. 20% of Grade IV pupils in rural areas fail to proceed with their primary education.

The third bottle-neck is at Grade VII level where about 13% only proceed to Grade VIII. Some of those children who drop out at Grade IV and VII levels repeat their respective grades but create congestion in classrooms. The result is that some classes are as big as 70 pupils. This sort of situation has adversely affected both teaching and learning[84].

The relatively low percentages shown for Asia and Oceania in Table 13 are due to countries like Japan, New Zealand and Australia where, for various reasons, there are very few drop-outs. It must not be forgotten, however, that some countries suffer from the problem to a very high degree. For example, Bangladesh reports:

Wastage in primary education is colossal. The percentage of wastage (drop-out) between class I and II is about 60 whereas the total wastage from class I to V is about 80%. This is a great problem. The drop-outs, particularly from class I to II relapse into illiteracy and they never come back to school. Dropping out may be due to lack of incentives, inadequate teaching facilities, bad management and poverty of parents[85].

The scene described in India is no less a matter for concern:

Out of every 100 children who enter the I grade, about 60 per cent leave the school before completing primary education up to class V and about 75 per cent leave the school before completing their education up to class VIII. ... The proportion of female drop-outs is more in urban areas than in rural areas. ... It is found that most of the wastage occurs in earlier classes, viz. I and II. The main causes for wastage are economic[86].

Pakistan paints a similar picture, noting a drop-out figure of more than 50% which occurs mainly in years I and II. Thailand also acknowledges a percentage of drop-outs which, although not comparable with the ones given above, is still fairly high: 16% on the average. The causes given lie in the same defects which we have had occasion to find in Latin America and Africa. China reports that it also suffers from these problems:

The existence of some dropouts and floaters of pupils reflect the fact that primary education has not been universalized in many rural areas. The reasons are multifold. Some families in the countryside need seasonable helping hands; some places encounter natural disasters; some schools are not reasonably located, which obliges children to go a long way to the school. To solve these problems, the government makes it a rule that during harvest seasons schools in rural areas may have harvest vacations in order to meet the need of helping hands in some peasants' families. Some places have even made 'local rules' in the spirit of the Constitution which is helpful to the solution of the problems of dropouts and floaters of pupils. Some orphan children who for various reasons cannot go to primary school are organized to study in sparetime schools and literacy courses in order to prevent them from becoming illiterate[87].

A large number of countries enjoy a better situation. In this region, in addition to Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Australia, we might include the Republic of Korea, whose drop-out rate is approximately 2.8%. Somewhat higher is that of Sri Lanka, with approximately 5.3% in the government schools. In the United Kingdom, the highest dropout rate is in year VI.

In Table 13, introducing this section, most of the Arab States included were in the African continent. The percentage of drop-outs in some of them (Morocco, for example, or Jordan) is still high. In 1981/82, the Syrian Arab Republic had between 1.3 and 5%, although the percentages of female drop-outs were higher (between 2.3 and 6.1%); as general averages, we are given figures of 2.2% for boys and 3.2% for girls, which amounts to a considerable decline from ten years ago. In Qatar, the percentage in the same year (1981/82) was 2.8, but in that case the situation was more favourable for girls (2.6% compared with 3% for boys).

Among the European countries, with some exceptions, dropping out of school does not present any serious problems. The Spanish report does not give any specific figures, but states that there is a certain number of school drop-outs 'as a result of the employment of child labour and young people in domestic and farm work (harvesting, etc.) by their own families'[88]. The problem seems to be more serious in Portugal: 'About 11% of the pupils leave

school after the first four years. The problem of school drop-outs and repeaters is basically due to reasons of a socio-cultural and economic nature'[89]. Turkey states that it does not have a particularly high rate of drop-outs in formal primary education, but that it does have in non-formal education, to which much attention is being paid.

Among the countries of Eastern Europe, the situation generally speaking is also favourable. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian SSR's report admits that 'some drop-outs from the general school can still be expected'[90], while that of Poland estimates drop-outs before the end of primary education (which is, it will be recalled, eight years) at 8.8%. Yugoslavia also states that there are some cases of dropping out in rural areas because of farm work.

Repetition rates

Table 15 shows the percentages of repeaters in the countries of four regions prepared by the Unesco Office of Statistics for the International Conference on Education in 1984. It should be noted that some countries have corrected, or perhaps it would be better to say updated, some of the figures contained in the table, as we shall have occasion to see in certain cases.

Unlike the case of drop-outs, we now see that only one Latin American country — Brazil — shows a repetition rate somewhat higher than 20%, while this figure is exceeded by another Caribbean country — Suriname. Except for those mentioned above, the countries with the highest percentages are all on the African continent. It seems logical, therefore, that we should begin our brief account with that continent.

With regard to those cases where there are more than 30% of repeaters, the reports confirm that there has not been much change in the situation. Angola gives us what is not a general repetition rate but one by years, with the following figures: year I, 32.4% of repeaters; II, 33.1%; III, 28.2%; and IV, 35.6%. Among the causes of such a high rate, it expressly mentions the difficulty of trying to learn in a language which is not the pupil's native tongue. Gabon does not present an overall average either, but the percentages it shows for year I are impressive: 51% of the pupils repeat this course once; 26% twice and 13% three times. The Central African Republic does not submit any figures, but admits that there are many repeaters who 'add to the expenditures of the State'[91]. Madagascar probably ought to be included in this same group, as it notes the following rates:

Concerning year I, more than half of the schools have percentages which vary between 30 and 42% of repeaters, and more than one-quarter of the schools have between 50 and 74%. In year

TABLE 15. Percentage of repeaters in primary education, boys and girls

Region	Below 5%		5-9.9%		10-14.9%
Africa	Sudan	0.0	Egypt	7.9	Algeria
	Zimbabwe	0.0	Kenya	8.9	Liberia
	Seychelles	0.8	Libyan Arab		Swaziland
	United Republic of Tanzania	1.2	Jamahiriya	9.2	Gambia
	Zambia	1.9	Uganda	9.6	Niger
	Ghana	2.0			Mauritania
	Botswana	4.6			Rwanda
Latin America and the Caribbean	Guyana	3.6	Cuba	6.8	Grenada
	Jamaica	3.9	Costa Rica	7.4	Ecuador
	Trinidad and Tobago	3.9	Argentina	7.5	Panama
			El Salvador	8.8	Chile
			Mexico	9.9	Paraguay
			Venezuela	9.9	
Asia and Oceania	Japan	0.0	Kuwait	6.2	Iraq
	Rep. of Korea	0.0	Viet Nam	6.9	Thailand
	Malaysia	0.0	Syrian Arab		Sri Lanka
	New Zealand	0.0	Republic	8.2	Oman
	Cyprus	0.6	United Arab		Bhutan
	Norfolk Island	1.3	Emirates	8.5	Brunei
	Mongolia	1.9	Indonesia	8.8	Bahrain
	Philippines	2.4	Tonga	9.2	Saudi Arabia
	Hong Kong	3.6	Qatar	9.5	Afghanistan
	Jordan	4.0			
	Singapore	4.0			
	Fiji	4.1			
	Kiribati	4.1			
	Solomon Islands	4.9			
Europe and the USSR	Denmark	0.0	Luxembourg	6.1	
	Norway	0.0	Spain	6.9	
	Sweden	0.0	France	9.2	
	United Kingdom	0.0			
	USSR	0.3			
	Czechoslovakia	0.9			
	San Marino	1.1			
	Greece	1.3			
	Italy	1.3			
	Yugoslavia	1.6			
	Bulgaria	1.7			
	Federal Rep. of Germany	1.9			
	Malta	2.0			
	Switzerland	2.2			
	Hungary	2.4			
	Netherlands	2.4			
	Austria	3.1			
	Poland	3.2			

15-19.9%		20-24.9%		25-29.9%		30% and above	
Sierra Leone	15.0	Zaire	20.1	Mali	26.7	Central African Republic	34.8
Senegal	15.7	Guinea	21.9	Congo	27.9	Gabon	34.8
Lesotho	16.4			Cape Verde	28.0	Angola	36.0
Burkina Faso	16.4			Guinea-Bissau	28.1	Togo	36.8
Malawi	17.4			Mozambique	28.7	Chad	37.6
Benin	18.2			Burundi	28.8	Sao Tome and Principe	46.6
Côte d'Ivoire	19.0			Morocco	29.0		
Tunisia	19.6			United Rep. of Cameroon	29.9		
Uruguay	14.9	Brazil	20.4	Suriname	25.8		
Nicaragua	15.3						
St. Pierre and Miquelon	15.8						
Honduras	16.2						
Guatemala	16.7						
Haiti	17.8						
Dominican Rep.	18.0						
Peru	18.5						
New Caledonia	15.6						
Bangladesh	17.8						
Portugal	16.6						
Belgium	19.0						

Source: Unesco, Office of Statistics, Division of Statistics on Education, *Evolution of wastage in primary education in the world between 1970 and 1980* Paris, 1984, p 10-11. (ED-BIE/CONFINTED 39/Ref. 2).

II, the percentages are better. In year III, the results are mediocre. One third of the schools have repetition rates of 30 to 49%. In years IV and V, the results are fairly good except in certain rural schools, where the repetition rates are still higher than 50%[92].

The situation seems to have changed substantially in Burundi, which is now applying the system of 'continuous promotion'.

The case of Senegal, which figures in the table with a high percentage of 15.7%, is somewhat confusing to judge by the data supplied in its report, according to which the repetition rate in the last year of primary education is no less than 35.9%. In any case, in Senegal a pupil can repeat only twice during primary education, and no more than once per year. Even so, the surprisingly high number of repetitions at the end of the primary period is no doubt an indication of maladjustments between the actual preparation of the pupils and the system of annual promotion.

Rwanda also offers a percentage (14.8%) which is close to that shown in Table 15; perhaps it is possible to note a slight deterioration in the situation. Ethiopia - not included in the table - should stand at a similar level, since its report gives an overall repetition rate of 13% for 1981. Nor is Benin included in the table, which would seem to suffer from the problem to a greater extent, with a repetition rate of 24.7%.

Uganda's situation seems to be more difficult than that suggested in the table:

The percentage of repeaters per class is between 10 and 15 per cent. However, school enrolment is increasing by 10 per cent each year. This is much less than the population increase in the relevant age group. It follows therefore, that there is a backlog of those who cannot gain admission in schools. The repeaters aggravate this situation[93].

The data supplied by Kenya in its report do not seem to coincide with those shown in the Unesco table. As stated in the report, repetitions occur above all in years V and VI and the rate given is 2.5%. The cause of this phenomenon is the final examination for primary education at the end of course VII: pupils who do not consider themselves well prepared sometimes prefer to repeat year VI in order to be more sure of promotion. However, additional confusion is introduced by the fact, also supplied in the report, that the total average number of years needed by a Kenyan child to go through primary education is eight and a half. If this is true, the repetition rate must be higher. Among the remedies proposed is increasing the length of primary education to eight years with automatic promotion between courses VII and VIII.

Most of the low percentages shown by some countries are due to the system of automatic promotion, whether applied totally or partially (in some years only). In spite of this, some reports complain of situations which are not free from problems, as, for example, the United Republic of Tanzania, which refers to the over-large classes sometimes caused by course repeaters.

Concerning Latin America and the Caribbean, the data supplied by the reports - bearing in mind that only a few refer to this point - coincide with those given in Table 14. Paraguay claims that, at the beginning of the 1980s, it had a somewhat lower percentage of repeaters (13.6%) than the 14.1% shown in the table, while Panama, on the contrary, shows a percentage for 1982 of 13.4%, in other words, considerably higher. Colombia, which is not included in the table, says that it has a total rate of 13.8%, which reaches higher figures in urban areas (16.3%) than in rural areas (12.5%). Some reasons for this phenomenon are given:

The principal cause of repetition is that education is poorly adapted to the socio-cultural realities of the different parts of the country, a fact which is more obvious in the rural areas. Other causes of repetition are also malnutrition and poor health due to inadequate incomes[94].

In Asia and Oceania, there are generally not such high rates, with the exception of Bangladesh (which is even low when compared with the drop-out rate). India's report does not supply any statistical data, but states that the repetition rate is high and that it has a very important effect on dropping out. In Pakistan - a country which, like India, is not included in the table - the situation seems to be similar.

Both Thailand and Sri Lanka give slightly higher figures than those shown in Table 15. Sri Lanka states that in the early preparatory course with which education begins, there is a repetition rate of 11%, a rate which in course V rises to 19%, since the main reasons for these repetitions seem to be of a socio-economic nature. The report emphasizes that the measures adopted include the free distribution of textbooks and increased lunch programmes in schools. As far as Thailand is concerned, the figure given in its report is 11%.

The judgements contained on this matter in the reports of the Republic of Korea and Malaysia - countries which use systems close to 'automatic promotion' - are particularly interesting. The Republic of Korea, after acknowledging an insignificant repetition rate, reveals that, when things are looked at from the right perspective, the basic situation is much more complicated and permits many real as well as hidden failures.

The reason [why] it is so difficult to determine an accurate attrition rate is because in most schools non-progressing students . . . are promoted to the next grade without having to drop out or repeat, and in this way the educational wastage is next to impossible to measure. If non-progressing students and slow learners are thus educationally neglected, this too can be viewed as a great educational wastage. With individual study, by reason of over-crowded classrooms, becoming almost impossible, this educational wastage bred from the circumstances of not being able to correct non-progressing students is seen as critical. If we look at it from another viewpoint, we can see wastage in mixing students of mediocre ability with those who are gifted without regard to separating gifted students and giving them an appropriate

education. Our country is now striving to develop a concrete policy with the recognition of the problem[95].

Malaysia's report proceeds from a different point of view, but reveals the same basic concern. It is worth while to reproduce its observations in full:

Physical drop-outs and repetition do not pose a great problem at the primary level because promotion between standards is automatic. More serious is the functional drop-outs, i.e. those who fail to follow the educational programmes of the school and the under-achievers. The Cabinet Committee set up to monitor the overall implementation of the national educational policy found, among other things, that the content of the primary school curriculum is too heavy for children between the ages of 6 to 12. Some pupils are not able to follow it, resulting in their mastery of only a few skills. Similar conclusion was reached when the Ministry of Education conducted a survey on the reading, writing and mathematical skills of primary school children in 1979/1980. Based primarily on the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee that primary education should be in the form of basic education with greater emphasis placed on the learning of the 3Rs, i.e. reading, writing and arithmetic, a new primary curriculum was formulated in 1981 and 1982, which is now being implemented in all standard one classes throughout Malaysia. Its full implementation is targeted for 1988 [96].

A similar problem has been evident for some years in certain European and North American countries. But before referring to them, we must mention the Arab States, which in Table 15 are included among the African and Asian countries. In fact, there is little to be said because the data shown in the reports substantially coincide with those in the table. The repetition reported by Jordan for the 1982/83 year is exactly the same and rather low, only 4%. The Syrian Arab Republic shows a percentage for 1981/82 which varies between 6.4 and 13.2%, which is also comparable to that in the United Arab Emirates. Qatar, on the other hand, states that it has a higher rate than that in the United Arab Emirates, specifically 11% (12% for boys and 10% for girls). The most disturbing situation is undoubtedly that of Morocco, which is properly reflected in the table: repeaters account for one-third of the pupils of the first course and one-half of those of the last course: at the time when the report was drafted, there was a study under way about the adoption of 'automatic promotion' as a possible remedy, but, after reading of the experiences in Malaysia and the Republic of Korea, we wonder whether it really will be a remedy.

In Europe, on the basis of their respective reports, the highest percentages of repeaters were found in Portugal and Belgium. According to Portugal's report, the repetition rate at the end of year II (first phase or cycle of primary education) is not more than 41%; at the end of year IV (i.e. the last year of the primary cycle) the rate is 27%. The problem is of deep concern to the Portuguese authorities, who are now trying to improve their educational and teacher training services in order to correct the situation.

In its report, Belgium prefers to list repeaters by each year: in year I, the rate is 12.25%; in II, 7.59%; in III, 7.60%; in IV, 7.12%; in V, 9.21% (the highest).

in VI, 6.18%. The total average for repeaters, in the first six years of school, is therefore 8.18%, a figure considerably different from that given in Table 14. The data in its report are for 1981/82.

The French report emphasizes a decline from the previous repetition rates, but notes that the problem still persists. Taken by cycles, the lowest is for the elementary cycle (years II and III) and varies between 7 and 8%. The highest is at the end of year I (preparatory cycle): 12.9%. In the intermediate cycle (the last, being years IV and V) the percentage is 10.6%.

Spain does not offer any specific repetition rates, but there are sufficient data to conclude that there is a very serious problem of backward pupils (whether repeaters or not). Its report states the following fact, which is quite alarming: 'the percentage of pupils who leave the school system without having managed to achieve its minimum objectives is approximately 40%'[97]. More intensive efforts are being made to correct this situation by renovating school programmes, increasing annual visits by the inspection services, advanced teacher training and, in particular, by programmes of compensatory education.

Aside from these and some other cases, most of the European countries show rather low repetition rates. This includes the countries of Eastern Europe, among which only Poland shows figures higher than 3% (3.5–4% in urban areas and 4.5% in rural areas). This does not mean that steps are not being taken to remedy the problems which arise and are in any case considered important. In the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, preference is given to the *prevention* of possible cases by organizing special preparatory classes at the pre-school level for children who show signs of immaturity or have difficulties in entering the *Grundschule*; at the same time, an effort is made to plan the primary school curriculum so that it will not be overloaded with cognitive subjects but will place greater emphasis on learning fundamental skills. Similar tendencies can be observed in the Scandinavian countries, in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, etc. In France, the new programmes for primary education published in April 1985 have also adopted the policy of strengthening knowledge and skills of a basic nature. In the introduction to this document, the prevailing belief is that the pupils 'should find all the intellectual and moral elements of a solid basic education in the primary school'[98].

* * *

To sum up, the struggle against school failure has been intensified in recent years in all countries of the world. The efforts are continuing, but it can be said that none of the methodological approaches used (automatic promotion, separate attention for backward and gifted pupils, programming concentrated on basic skills, etc.) has met with a general consensus about its suitability and

efficiency. On the other hand, since it is essentially a qualitative problem, in many countries school failure will continue to be a second priority problem compared to efforts made on behalf of universalization, although, as was made clear at the beginning of this chapter, any real democratization of primary education will be impossible unless this problem can be successfully solved.

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CHAPTER VI

The present and future of primary education

1. TRENDS TOWARDS RENEWAL

The reports presented at the thirty-ninth session of the International Conference on Education provided evidence of both the efforts at renewal made in recent years and, through those efforts, a picture of what primary education will continue to be at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It would seem advisable, therefore, to begin by observing what countries themselves consider to be the most likely future development trends.

A continuous improvement in quality

It is a very significant fact that very few countries say that they have undertaken any radical reform towards the improvement of quality in recent years or are going to undertake one in the next few years. The belief seems to be constantly gaining ground that improvements must be based more on uninterrupted effort than on the adoption of exceptional measures which would presuppose a break with the past. Even in the case of those countries which have undergone substantial political changes in the past few years, there seems to be a prevailing tendency to make the best possible use of the existing structural foundations and to introduce desirable modifications in them rather slowly.

There are many explicit or implicit references to educational renewal as a 'continuous process'. These words appear in many reports, such as, for example, those of Australia, Colombia, Denmark, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, the USA, the United Kingdom, etc. But there is a larger group of countries which, without perhaps referring to it specifically, express a general concern about renewal in primary education, a concern which is demonstrated by on-going activities. This is shown in the reports, among others, from Canada, Czechoslovakia, China, Gabon, India, Malta, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic, etc.

In almost all of these reports, the predominant concern is on educational quality. There also appears to be some concern from a quantitative point

view in certain countries, which, like Bangladesh and Pakistan, are making considerable efforts to overcome the numerous obstacles in their way towards universalization. Some others, as in Indonesia, are trying to increase the capacity of their primary schools to absorb the prospective pupils. Nevertheless, even Indonesia states that the primary objective of its reform is to improve quality; a similar opinion is expressed in Pakistan's report, since it is aware that only a useful and attractive school will be able to capture the attention of those who are not normally interested in attending it. Many other reports also refer to quality. That of Yugoslavia, for example, states that 'the quality of education will be at the heart of the renewal of primary education in the coming decades'[1].

The opinions expressed in the Yugoslav document are of particular interest, since the ideas of renewal expressed there are typical of many other countries. The report includes four principles:

- The first might be conceived as a certain *denationalization* of primary education (although it should be said that the report does not use this exact term). It clearly refers to intentions to 'further relax state controls in primary education', adding that 'the role of the government educational authorities in defining the policies and practice of primary education is diminishing'.
- The second foreseeable trend is connected with 'the need for greater deschooling of primary education which in this context means the creation of conditions that will enable educational activities to take place in the pupils' living and working environment, giving this environment the characteristics of an educational and learning environment'.
- The third principle is the need to have a 'unified system of primary education' throughout the country (in this connection, we must not forget Yugoslavia's regional diversity, a phenomenon which is not unique to this country).
- Lastly, the fourth line of renewal 'is more strictly pedagogical, having to do with changes in the organization and style of work in teaching and in primary education ...'[2].

We shall see further on that these lines of future renewal, in one way or another, are to be found in reports from countries of very diverse political, social and cultural characteristics.

Present principles of renewal

However, the principles which have guided the renewal of primary education in these last decades of the twentieth century are not limited to the four themes mentioned above. Let us look at some of those which are most frequently mentioned by countries.

One that deserves special mention could be called the principle of the *efficiency* or even the profitability of the primary institutional apparatus as a whole and of the schools in particular. The United States' report emphasizes the need to increase effective teaching practices in the classrooms. The report from France, referring specifically to the projects of educational activities which are being carried out in special priority areas for the purpose of reducing school failure, says that the purpose of these projects is simply to achieve much higher degrees of educational efficiency. Reference might be made to other highly developed countries, although to refer exclusively to them would put the matter somewhat out of perspective.

The principle of efficiency appears in the same way in other contexts. As an example, in the case of Indonesia or Ethiopia. Occasionally there are indications of an economic character — or of the profitability of the institutional apparatus. For instance, Pakistan considers that its priority objective, and doubtless its future line of action, is to reduce the costs of primary education, for the specific purpose of facilitating the extension of its school network.

Some countries stress the need for the primary school to be a genuine *community for living and learning*. Australia and Belgium are countries which refer specifically to this point, but many countries are also trying to find a useful place for the school within the community which surrounds it; we shall have occasion to refer particularly to them farther on.

As is only obvious, it is usual to place special emphasis on those aspects which are thought to be neglected or insufficiently looked after. Hence, some countries stress principles which are not even referred to in most of the reports. This is true, for example, concerning *co-education* in the primary schools. There are very few references to this practice, sometimes because it is considered something so well-established as to not require comment, and on other occasions, because it is felt that co-education is undesirable (in some Islamic countries, as noted earlier). One of the few countries which has already emphasized the application of this principle for some years is Iraq, which in its report also brings out the importance of employing *guidance* in primary education.

It is somewhat surprising that guidance activities, which are as necessary as they are rare, are hardly mentioned at all in the reports. Neither are there many references to the principle of *equal opportunity*, which most countries undoubtedly wish to apply and encourage. Among the few reports which refer to it is that of Seychelles, although there is reason to believe that it is referred to indirectly in some of the others.

Among possibilities of renewal, a few reports refer to *basic principles of a socialist nature* as applied to primary education; this is especially true in the case of countries which have recently adopted Marxist-Leninist régimes, s

as Angola, Mozambique and Viet Nam or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In other cases, specific priorities are sometimes set depending on fairly important deficiencies of which they are fully aware. For example, the importance of paying greater attention to the *female student population* is considered a priority for countries like Bangladesh, Nepal or India, while Luxembourg is more concerned with adequate schooling for *immigrant* children.

It is also interesting to note the reference in some reports to factors which can act as a stimulus to innovation or, on the contrary, act as a brake. Among the former, China includes an adequate knowledge of foreign innovations and reforms.

The external elements affecting the innovation come from our inadequate knowledge of educational innovations abroad. We hope, however, that this situation could be gradually changed through international exchanges and with the help of Unesco[3].

We shall not refer especially to the obstacles to innovation, since they are mostly the same ones which, in previous pages, were seen to affect the expansion and improvement of primary education. But it may be worthwhile to mention one which has not been singled out up to now, namely, the lack of continuity in reforms, caused by the fluctuating fortunes of the political parties which champion them and the lack of any proper agreement between the political forces involved. The reports of Belgium and Portugal refer expressly to this brake on the spirit of renovation, but it is obvious that this could also be mentioned by many other countries. Occasionally, the reports supply data which lead one to suppose that this lack of agreement between the various forces involved is going to continue in the future; for example, careful note should be taken of the reference made in the Spanish report to 'resistance of a political-ideological nature to be found both within the educational administration and on the part of certain sectors of society which are excessively attached to situations which are already out of date'[4].

Administrative innovations

The reports do not suggest that there are going to be any substantial reforms in the administrative structures of primary education, just as, generally speaking, no such reforms seem to have occurred in recent years. Among the few countries referring to reforms of this type, we must include Thailand, which mentions the reform carried out there in 1980. Other countries where important administrative changes have undoubtedly been carried out — as in Belgium and Spain, for example — do not refer to them in the questionnaire itself, probably because they have already paid some attention to them in their general report. However, since primary education is particularly affected by

these changes of government and administration, some explicit reference to them would have been desirable when dealing with the subject of reforms and innovations.

Some countries are undergoing a process of *decentralization* in the administration of their primary schools. Sweden's report places considerable emphasis on this. Likewise, that of Finland, which mentions that powers are delegated to the local authorities with respect to curricula. Australia is moving in the same direction, as its report refers to 'devolution' to the local authorities. In Argentina, the specific starting point for the whole process of reform came out in recent years was a serious effort, both legal and actual, towards decentralizing education. However, the political changes subsequent to the report, which our comments are based, have introduced important corrective factors, and, at the present time, it is hard to tell whether the initial decentralization will be a lasting fact. This point was referred to in the first chapter.

Some innovations have also been carried out in Argentina with respect to school *supervision* or inspection. The old tradition, by which the primary school supervisors resided in Buenos Aires and carried out their work there, was abandoned and the zonal and regional supervisors now have to work in the provinces. In any case, it is possible that in the coming years there will be important changes in this respect, especially if the plans announced by the President of the Republic in 1986 to transfer the nation's political capital to Viedma in Patagonia are carried out. The Spanish report also announced some innovations with respect to school inspection, and measures taken subsequent to the report indicate changes both in the selection of inspectors and in their functions. In Iraq, changes have also been made concerning the choice not only of supervisors but also of school principals.

With regard to the organizational aspects of schools and school life as a whole, the reports do not disclose the prospect of any extreme changes. Some countries seem to aim their reforms at getting *more flexible school schedules* which will enable them, as pointed out in Japan's report, to carry out activities which were not previously in their programme, thus encouraging the creation of the schools themselves, or making it easier to attend the special local needs, as seen in Finland's report. There do not seem to be many references to the subject which is still being discussed by specialists, teachers and parents in many countries: that of extending the school schedule — in the case of countries with a short day — or, on the contrary, reducing schedules which are overloaded [5]. One interesting proposal for renewal is gaining ground in some parts of Belgium under the name of *pedagogical half-time*, which reserves the mornings for disciplines which require greater conceptual concentration and the afternoons for activities of an artistic, cultural or athletic character. As we shall see later on, in some countries there is a growing belief that the la

subjects should rather be considered as *out-of-school activities* or at least as *para-school activities*.

Structural innovations

In the light of the reports, it seems certain that now and in the near future, there will not be any desire to introduce far-reaching changes in the structure of education systems of the kind that perhaps characterized the 1960s and 1970s. Most countries, regardless of their degree of economic and educational development, do not refer at all to these possible changes of structure. A recent study by the OECD describes this phenomenon in so far as it refers to countries belonging to that organization, while covering compulsory schooling as a whole:

Most countries would appear to have completed their reforms of the structures of the compulsory school by the end of the 1970s. A majority of countries has now established the common school as the only, or at least the predominant type, covering both cycles, i.e. primary and lower secondary. Several countries still retain a parallel system at the lower secondary level and show no signs of departing from it. In this sense, OECD countries have probably entered a period when the structures of compulsory schooling are not likely to undergo significant change for some time[6].

As we have said, this phenomenon can also be found in countries with various kinds and degrees of development. In most cases, it is thought that the reforms carried out in the last few decades are going to be stable. The report of the German Democratic Republic, for example, states that 'it was shown that the general outline of the ten-year general education which was prepared in the sixties and seventies will meet all demands also in future'[7].

However, there is a group of developing countries which are either continuing an effort at structural reform begun early in the 1980s or slightly before, or else are now taking the first steps towards a renewal of this kind. All of them agree in aiming at a general and polyvalent school, which is given various names. Thus, for example, some countries continue to keep the traditional name of 'primary school'; this is the case in Kenya, which is moving in the direction of extending its former seven-year primary school to eight years, with the associated changes (organizational, curricular, evaluative, etc.) which such a decision will involve. The same thing is happening in Rwanda, whose primary school, prior to 1969, lasted for only six years. Mozambique, as the first institutional link in its new national system of education, is establishing a 'primary school' lasting seven years (its former one, based on the typical Portuguese model, lasted four years).

However, this period of general education is more often being given other names, depending on the period of compulsory schooling. In 1984, Sri Lanka undertook a process of reform in this connection aimed at establishing an

elementary education of eight years. The reform undertaken in Viet Nam aims at this same number of years; it calls for basic general education, the five years of which constitute the primary education stage properly speaking.

But other countries are hoping to organize somewhat longer periods of general education, lasting nine years. The Central African Republic has been trying to do this since 1982 by establishing a two-stage fundamental education — I and II — lasting five and four years respectively. According to its report, fundamental education I would coincide with primary education. The tendency towards nine years of general education is also being seriously considered among the Arab States; three of them — Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia — are now moving in this direction, although they do not give the same name to the whole period. While Algeria uses the expression 'fundamental education', Egypt seems to prefer that of 'basic general education' and Tunisia that of 'basic education'. In Latin America, Nicaragua is also continuing to establish 'basic general education' lasting nine years, of which primary education — whose establishment and universalization it now places special emphasis on — accounts for the first four.

Innovations in curricula

It is undoubtedly here that the greatest efforts at renewal have been concentrated during the decade of the 1980s. Among other countries, reforms in this direction are being made in Austria, Botswana, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Guyana, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, the Republic of Korea and Thailand, not to mention other countries like the United States of America, Denmark, the United Kingdom and all those engaged in an effort of permanent renewal.

As a part of this effort of renewal in curricular matters, certain countries emphasize general aspects. In Poland, for example, 'priority rank [is given to] modernizing the principles of programming and organization'[8], while, according to its report, the Islamic Republic of Iran is trying out 'new methods of planning and curriculum'[9]. The United States seems to be particularly concerned about adequate co-ordination of the school programme as a whole, i.e. in relation to the various levels and stages which make up the education given in each institution. Countries are also frequently concerned with replacing the usual 'year', 'course' or 'grade' of studies by a 'cycle' of longer duration. Belgium, for example, emphasizes this point and seems to favour the extension of two-year 'cycles' or units. As a part of co-ordination between levels, which we have just referred to, a considerable number of countries are particularly concerned about the co-ordination which should exist between the

school or nursery school and the primary level. The most ambitious reform in this direction seems to be that of the Netherlands which, since 1985, seems to be proceeding on the basis of a genuine continuity between both levels, but ideas of this same kind are being aired in Belgium, Colombia, the Federal Republic of Germany, the USSR, etc.

There are frequent references to the present overloading of teaching programmes and content, and the need to avoid this. Innovations aimed at this purpose are being introduced, among other places, in Japan, Malaysia and Switzerland. The latter country's report indicates that overloading has occurred by adding new subjects to the school programme, such as 'road safety education', 'consumer education', 'sexual education', etc. Reports from such different countries as the Federal Republic of Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran show the importance of, and the attention consequently given to, the development of character and morality; we may recall that in the latter country the principle called 'moral purification' has become the main pillar on which the school's educational plan must be built. In other reports, as in that of the United States, stress is laid on the growing role assigned to programming for the acquisition of cultural values and standards. The German Democratic Republic emphasizes motivations of a pacifist nature:

Another basic aspect of any innovation is the consideration of all issues concerning education in the spirit of peace and disarmament, international understanding, active solidarity and an allround implementation of human rights[10].

In developing countries in particular, the need for primary education to be perfectly *integrated in its surroundings* and to respond to local needs has been strongly brought out in evidence in recent years; unfortunately, as some reports have in fact regretted, this need has more often been the subject of theoretical statements than of practical accomplishments. However, experiments of undoubted importance are being carried out or are encouraged in many countries, such as Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and other African countries, as well as in some Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, etc.) and in Latin America (Brazil, Colombia, Peru, etc.).

The desire to introduce a *community school* which will stimulate the cultural ambitions of children, young people and adults and which at the same time will be a factor in the community's economic and social development is at last finding the necessary support in the form of specific innovations. Instead of encouraging children to migrate to the city, the primary school has the responsibility for stimulating their appreciation of their own surroundings so that they will want to collaborate in improving them. Therefore, some reports — like that of Cameroon — include the *ruralization* of the school programme

among the most important objectives of renewal. At the same time, however, it is necessary to avoid an excessive interest in purely local characteristics which might become especially serious in young countries which are under the necessity of strengthening their sense of *national unity*: Uganda's report refers primarily to the curricular reforms which it has carried out for this purpose.

Many innovating experiments are being carried out to improve efficiency in each specific field of learning. Methods and techniques which enjoyed great favour scarcely ten years ago — like the 'global' method of learning to read or the so-called 'new mathematics' — are being subjected to discussion and corrections.

In view of the special needs of different countries, it is necessary to pay particular attention to certain subjects in the curriculum. In the language field we can observe a growing concern about encouraging the correct learning of a second language (as, for example, in Switzerland) or making sure that situations due to bilingualism (such as exists in Luxembourg) will not provoke a drop in school achievement. In the African continent, many countries have recently introduced their own or native language as the teaching language. The process of Arabization is going on in States like Morocco or Tunisia, while, on the other hand, the adoption of the predominant local language requires methodological efforts in Burundi, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Senegal, etc., especially if we bear in mind that almost none of these countries want to do away with teaching the colonial language in the primary schools. In some of them, such as Cameroon, are carrying out curricular renovations aimed at providing the pupils with a knowledge of two widely influential languages. In the Asian continent, innovations of the same kind have been introduced in countries like Malaysia. As for Latin America, similar projects for innovation can be found in Peru, Mexico, etc., but meet with such resistance that the actual results are limited.

A considerable number of countries are carrying out innovations in the special field of aesthetic and manual education: as their reports indicate, this is the case in Finland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Morocco and Rwanda. The French report refers to the fact that in recent years experiments and innovations have been mainly concentrated on the interdisciplinary and practical field which the French call *activités d'éveil*, which have already been mentioned.

Lastly, we must not forget the considerable importance attached to various kinds of vocational training, especially in developing countries. The introduction of manual training, especially in the last courses of primary education, is considered an important innovation in countries like Congo, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Zambia, etc.

The introduction of modern technologies in primary schools, is, according to the reports, connected with these manual training objectives (as in some countries which are already applying the principle of 'polytechnical' education at this level). However, as we can easily gather, there are not many objectives of specifically manual training at the primary level in the industrialized countries; it can be said that, generally speaking, they are only considered indirectly, in the long term, in the form of manual activities and habits which can possibly lead to future vocational skills. It can be observed that this is also the case even when primary education lasts a long time and, moreover, when there is an effort to apply the 'polytechnical' principle. Yugoslavia's report, for example, is very careful to explain at the start that primary education 'does not prepare young people for direct entry into the world of work, even though it offers them an extensive polytechnical education, introduces them to the world of work, and is based on work'[11]. Consequently, in that country, as in many others, 'technology education does not exist as a separate course'[12], and modern technologies are introduced through the different fields and activities provided for in the curriculum, sometimes by methodological means (audio-visual, computers, various tools).

Although the everyday work of the schools often continues to place obstacles in the way of the new technologies — which obviously is not the case in other sectors of society, or even in the family — there are innumerable innovations which are trying to get a footing in this respect. In the United States:

Computers and calculators are increasingly being integrated into the [kinderdarten to grade 6] curriculum. Currently the predominant use of computers at the K—6 level is for arithmetic drill and practice; in the elementary science curriculum there is presently very little computer software. Computer literacy courses, translated as learning about computers and other forms of technology, their role, use, and impact on our society now and in the future, are increasingly being introduced at the primary level[13].

There is very little of this in the primary schools of the developing countries. Even where there are long periods of primary education focused on manual work, it would seem that technological innovations will still be slow in appearing. As Rwanda's report, for example, says: 'there is no training in technology, but the pupils are given an elementary introduction to various trades'[14]. But it should not be forgotten that initiating pupils into working life has, in itself, constituted an important innovation. At the present time, it would be unreasonable to expect anything else. As King says, also with reference to the 1984 International Conference on Education: 'Many countries report that they can at present afford little more, and it is very much to their credit that they have progressed so far'[15].

In every case, the importance of *out-of-school activities* is becoming increasingly obvious, and it is therefore not surprising that many reports consider such activities as a means of increasing the efficiency of school activity. Some

countries in Eastern Europe refer to the contribution made by association children and young people in various matters concerning education and instruction. The report of the United States stresses the role played by associations and clubs in teaching children scientific subjects, or in making them acquainted with certain modern technologies. There are some reports which seem to prefer to depend on *para-school activities*, i.e. activities not carried out outside the school but within it, although not within the school's daily schedule. In this connection, Morocco refers to the work done by the school libraries, by some reviews and publications produced by the pupils themselves or by the school co-operatives. The Islamic Republic of Iran points to the success which some of its educational publications have had, as for example, the monthly periodical *Roshd* ('To grow'). To sum up, it seems clear that the renewal of primary education does not depend exclusively on innovations made in the curricula or in certain organizational aspects of the school, but on an innovating environment which is open and accessible both to social needs and to the interests of children.

The meaning of renewal

Up to this point, country reports have shown us, in a very general way, what they consider to be the renewal of primary education. The question can now be asked as to whether the policies of renewal which have been described are going to make any substantial change in the nature of primary education at the threshold of the third millennium. It would seem that, in principle, the reply should be in the negative. In almost all cases, the innovations introduced or programmed for the next few years are not aimed at replacing any of the policies, organizations, structures or curricula now in force, but rather at improving and supplementing them. And, in quite a few cases, even at strengthening them. As far as primary education is concerned, the last years of the twentieth century do not seem to be in favour of deep reforms in depth, but rather for making better use of the many — and occasionally arduous — efforts during the past decades and for a cautious and deliberate improvement of what has been achieved up to now. Aside from some rhetorical statements, no country seems inclined to throw overboard its institutional heritage it has received, especially in those cases — relatively common among developing countries — when this heritage is well adapted to their own needs. It might be said that a predominantly conservative spirit is animating the educational world at the end of the twentieth century. It seems obvious that this has been considerably influenced by the fact that the funds earmarked for education in general, and for primary education in particular, have already reached a ceiling which it will be hard to exceed and perhaps difficult to maintain.

In his 1975 study, Phillips reviewed the different terminologies which are customarily employed in connection with the idea of renewal when applied to the field of education. According to him, the word 'reform' expresses a more substantial change of nature, a change which affects the social and political access of a considerable portion of the population to education or the improvement of their educational status and opportunities [16]. The term 'renovation' has a narrower meaning, specifically 'to improve the existing system with some additions to bring it up to date'. Lastly, the word 'innovation' is not usually employed to express 'any kind of change but one brought into existence as a result of discovery, invention or research and development, as in industry'[17].

As we understand it, Questionnaire no. 1, prepared by the IBE in 1983 as a guide for countries in their reports, did not use the term 'renewal' in the same sense given it by Phillips but as a generic word to express more or less substantial changes of various magnitudes; it could be understood as covering both far-reaching reforms and subtle innovations. This is how the countries did, in fact, interpret it when submitting their replies. However, these replies also showed that the predominant tendency in many countries was in the direction of renovations and innovations in the sense used by Phillips. A probable symptom of this is the fact that few countries have recently undertaken, or are thinking of undertaking, a reform of their institutional structure. A symptom which, on the other hand, must be interpreted with caution, because not all countries which favour changes in their structure are carrying out real reforms in the best sense of the word (let us think of Kenya, for example). On the other hand, some countries which have chosen to preserve the old structure seem to have undertaken reforms (the Islamic Republic of Iran, for example). In interpreting the greater or lesser extent of what are listed as reforms, we must also take a close look at the specific measures and their effects and not let ourselves be carried away by the language of the politicians, who, especially in statements intended to be read in their own countries, frequently consider themselves obliged to call something a far-reaching reform which is only a mere updating or an adjustment to new circumstances of a political, social, scientific or educational nature.

The 'renewal' about which the IBE requested reports was also considered 'in the perspective of an appropriate introduction to science and technology'. The study carried out by King for the IBE has given a good account of this specific point, which cannot be dealt with here. However, it does seem advisable to note that what we now know as 'technological revolution' is not yet a part of the renovations and innovations introduced or programmed in the field of primary education. But this revolution is in fact going on and will undoubtedly bring about far-reaching changes during the twenty-first century. In view of the

present circumstances, the process will probably be a slow and laborious. King has perceived this very clearly: 'In all these circumstances, the implications for education of the revolutions in technology and communication are far-reaching and multifarious as they are bound to be experimental for a time'[18].

2. NATURE AND FUNCTION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The semantic problem

Today, in many places, the term 'primary education' has lost much of its meaning. People have often become accustomed to using the new terminology introduced by politicians and teachers, such as the 'basic school', 'general school' or even the 'intermediate or secondary school' as the school which is in fact, within the reach of all or most of the population. The term 'primary' recalls to them other times, perhaps those times when the older generations attended a school with more or less difficulty, or perhaps even those parts of the population — in general, the vast majority — who were not permitted access to any higher institutions. It is sufficient to review once more the report from the thirty-ninth ICE in order to realize that the variety of terms and meanings more than justifies reconsideration of the terminological question. There can be no doubt that everybody has a vague idea of what we are referring to when we talk about primary education. But in our opinion, such a mere approximate idea is not sufficient. It is impossible to arrive at a clear definition of what primary education is and should be if we continue to be content with the present confused situation. Assuming, of course, that 'primary education' is to continue to mean something.

Phillips, who was very careful about analysing the meaning of other terms like 'renovation' or 'reform', did not think it necessary to weigh the meaning of what was to be the fundamental subject of his study. He followed the conventional approximation.

By 'first level' or 'basic' education will be meant both primary education in school, especially the elementary part of the cycle where the primary cycle is a long one, and recuperative education through non-formal education for youth who missed the necessary formal schooling. What in mind is the minimum set of learning needs for the individual for function in his society, in his physical environment[19].

The first thing that stands out in this text is the reference to 'especially elementary part of the cycle'. The use of the adverb 'especially' indicates that in these cases the higher part of the cycle is not ignored but is *also* taken into account. But we should also ask ourselves why this first or elementary part is considered 'especially basic'. The terminology used by countries rather

gests the contrary. As we have had an opportunity to see, many countries have introduced, or are in the process of introducing, a 'basic' or 'fundamental' education whose primary characteristic is precisely the fact that it is not limited to these first years but has added others which are considered equally necessary in order to meet certain minimum objectives. In such cases, it is thought that 'basic' is not, and should not be, the same thing as 'elementary'. The subject becomes even more complicated if we bear in mind that this latter term is not interpreted everywhere in the same way in all contexts. In the United States, for example, the 'elementary school' has traditionally been an institution which operates over a period of eight years.

As if that were not enough, things are made still more complicated by the inclusion in one and the same semantic unit of 'formal' primary education and the supplementary 'non-formal' education for the benefit of adults who have not had sufficient schooling. Such an inclusion ignores the fact that 'primary education' is not defined solely on the basis of its teaching *content* but on the basis of the *age* and specific degree of maturity and development of its pupils. We have seen, in fact, that certain countries — Turkey or Peru, for example — consider those branches listed as 'formal' and 'non-formal' to be proper branches of their primary or basic education. But this is not so in many other cases. Nor is it clear that such cases will be more frequent in the future.

Obviously, the crux of the matter is an adequate definition of this 'minimum set of learning needs' to which Phillips refers. The subject is no doubt highly debatable and lends itself to the adoption of minimalist and maximalist positions. However, the worldwide tendency does not seem to lie in the direction of the former, i.e. that of putting up with rudimentary literacy which is fated to gradually fade away in unpromising cultural surroundings. If habits — intellectual, cultural, social, etc. — are to be acquired, they must also be exercised over a sufficient number of years. They cannot be improvised. Experience has shown that to teach children for only a few short years (let us say two or three) often turns out to be irrelevant and economically barren; after a short length of time they once more have to be rescued from the masses of the illiterate.

With respect to the problem now before us, it seems necessary to continue our efforts to ensure better typification of education systems and a better definition of their levels, in keeping with the evolution which has occurred in recent decades. The efforts made in this direction by Unesco, OECD and the Council of Europe have been very successful, especially for purposes of statistical comparison, but on every occasion they seem to be less adapted to the present situation[20]. The marks of time weigh too heavily upon them, at least as far as the primary and secondary levels are concerned. What is described in Unesco's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) as 'second-

level education: first cycle' has come to be considered as 'basic education' in developed countries and most of the developing countries, and it is difficult to distinguish it from what is called 'first-level education'.

On the other hand, there is a much greater institutional distinction and separation of objectives between the two cycles of what is traditionally considered secondary or 'second-level' education. We must insist that this is not a purely terminological and unimportant question. As long as it is not satisfactorily solved, the very nature and functions of primary education will continue to be vague and ambiguous. On the other hand, to agree on a correct definition of levels does not presuppose that it will be necessary to try to standardize given institutional structure. The diversity of institutional solutions, which is based on each country's own cultural tradition, is even a desirable thing and can and should be respected.

An adequate solution of the semantic problem might perhaps involve the gradual abandonment of the terms 'primary education' and 'primary school' in favour of others such as 'general', 'fundamental', 'basic' education, etc. The same thing has happened in the past with such terms as 'grammar school', 'people's school' and various others. If that were the case, the 'primary school' would remain in the memory of the twentieth century as one of its splendid cultural achievements. But other solutions are also called for, including (in spite of the difficulties referred to) the need to keep urging countries to apply the criteria contained in ISCED.

What should take priority in primary education?

When one reads about the objectives assigned to primary education and compares them with the meagre results achieved by its pupils, educators and those responsible for the educational apparatus frequently experience feelings of discouragement. The pompous declarations about 'integral' or 'multi-sided' education, 'holistic development of the personality', 'increased morality', 'high civic responsibility', 'cultural maturity', etc., will later show up only as high percentages of pupils who do not even reach a minimum level in these important responsibilities, not to mention the much more modest skills of reading and understanding an ordinary newspaper written in ordinary language, carrying out simple arithmetical operations without (or even with) calculating machines, behaving themselves properly in the street or respecting their contemporaries.

As we have been able to judge, this disproportion between objectives and results has been responsible for many efforts and experiments aimed at improvement. There is an attempt to ensure that the primary school will have at least a minimum efficiency as far as substantial matters are concerned. But the problem immediately arises when we have to specify just what those matters

are or should be. As we have had occasion to note, the enthusiasm of past times for the interests of the child, for his free development in a relaxed school atmosphere, has resulted in a certain disenchantment and in attitudes which are more or less sceptical or critical, especially in countries of higher educational development. On the other hand, we hear insistent appeals for a much more intensive cultivation of the so-called *basic skills* (especially reading, writing and arithmetic), while there are always more voices raised in favour of greater attention to moral education and the restoration of a climate of discipline and work. In many places, the school is accused of alienating the children from the needs and circumstances of their own surroundings, while attempting (often unsuccessfully) to inspire them with a bookish culture which is foreign to their interests and sometimes taught in a language which is different from that used in the home and in the street.

From all we have been saying, it is immediately obvious that we have to determine what our priority objectives and activities in primary education should be. Today, many countries — perhaps even the great majority of them — are once more confronted with this old dilemma. Among other things, we might be able to extract the following conclusions from their experiments, problems and projects for innovation.

First, the need to analyse in increasing detail what are the real *bases* of the culture, and the material and spiritual progress of each individual and the society as a whole, while permanently revising assumptions which have been bequeathed to us by history, especially that which is most closely linked to the birth and expansion of education systems. Such an analysis might slowly produce a picture of priorities which will guide us in choosing coherent, precise, attainable and verifiable objectives.

Secondly, the need for maintaining, elevating and improving perennial *principles* of education which have been especially emphasized in the last few centuries, such as those of adapting the subjects to the interests of the pupil, encouraging his activity and creativity, etc., while applying these principles in the exact direction indicated by the priorities which have been chosen.

Thirdly, the need to reorganize both the priority objectives and the principles of educational action on the basis of the *special needs of the physical, social, economic and cultural environment itself*. This will doubtless lead to a considerable *diversity* of plans among countries as to what should be considered as the priority objectives in everyday school practice and in the school programme as a whole. Which amounts to admitting that there will not be a model 'primary education' applicable to any environment but as many kinds of primary education as there are environments, although equally aimed at priorities of individual and social advancement and nor merely at meeting the local or alleged needs of the native community.

Fourthly and lastly, the need to make use of as many resources as possible in order to fulfil the priorities which have been set. As is only obvious, the actual possibilities in each country or in each community will set peremptory limits on the use of resources. Among these, the new vanguard technologies, especially in communication, will be difficult for many countries to master. This opens up a broad field, as stated in many reports, for international co-operation, which must be constantly strengthened and speeded up.

Should primary education prepare the pupil for an occupation?

Admitting the variety of forms which can be taken by primary education depending on its surroundings, the problem is not to decide whether it is the duty of the primary school to assume some responsibility for vocational training but rather to ask in what circumstances and conditions it ought and ought not to do so.

In this matter, we have seen that the views of countries vary greatly and are decisively influenced by at least two important circumstances: (a) whether the period of primary education is long or short; (b) the degree of economic development achieved.

Almost everywhere, historical factors have an unfavourable influence. Primary education has not, traditionally, assumed responsibility for this task. When it has seemed desirable, especially in recent decades, to introduce some kind of manual or vocational training, considerable efforts have been necessary in order for it to become accepted in a water-tight and resistant structure. The educational value of work in the primary school has been defended on many occasions, and account has doubtless been taken of what Kerschbaumer said at the beginning of the century: 'The natural dispositions and inclinations of at least 90 per cent of the pupils in primary school are not suited for working with books, as is the case in our present schools, but rather turn towards practical work'[21].

It is customary to understand these words in the sense of what might be described as the principle of school action, replacing the pupil's traditional passivity by an activity directed at the various aspects of the curriculum. In this way, it was sometimes possible for the school to be a 'school for work' which was undoubtedly also an excellent means of training the pupil for a kind of future work.

This conception of the role of work in the school had far-reaching repercussions in all modern education systems, but it has met with extensive modifications according to the Marxist conception of education. The connection between 'education and production' has always been one of the basic pillars of Marxist pedagogics. It was not simply a question of acknowledging the e

cational value of work and consequently organizing some activities which would put it into practice, such as manual activities, nor was it solely a matter of applying the principle of industriousness or experimentation in learning all subjects. It was a question of introducing 'productive work' into the school as a means of general education and vocational training at the same time. In the 1920s, the Soviet educator Pinkevič took this view towards the *trudovaya škola* (school for work) which it was planned to establish, although not without long discussions about its physiognomy and functions:

What fundamental differences distinguish a school of this kind from the schools advocated by Dewey, Oestreich, Faris and Robin? In the first place, a difference in ends. ... In the second place, a difference in the role assigned to work in the school. In our school, the centre of every activity is not manual work. ... We are not blind enthusiasts for manual labour without taking due account of its form. Basically, this defence of manual labour is a defence of the past. The work of the craftsman has already yielded up its place to industrial production and, if we wish to understand and *live* in contemporary culture, if we want to understand and *begin to live* in accordance with the way of life and ideology of the proletariat, we must above all become imbued with the culture of machine production. In a word: our school must be an industrial school[20].

But this interpretation was not unanimously accepted. Many teachers and educators emphasized the possible dangers for the schools if they concentrated on early vocational training. Krupskaya had certainly emphasized in 1920 that 'accustoming a child to this or that vocation from early childhood means that the discovery and development of his creative abilities are prevented and that the spirit within him is killed'[23]. Therefore, when referring to the 'unified school for work' which had been created shortly before, and more specifically to its first stage (for children between age 7 and 12), she wrote:

The first stage of the Unified Labour School (polytechnical school for children from 7 to 12 years old) is only a preparatory stage for conscious participation in production. ... The task of the first stage is to give children the opportunity to accustom themselves to humanity's ideas and life through books; ... But the most important task of the first stage is in training the ability to live and work collectively (organisation of school life, organisation of collective work, organisation of play). Work at this stage must be very easy (gathering plants, caring for animals, delivering letters and notices, tidying up and so on). The second stage (from 12 to 16 years inclusive) must be established on participation in production[24].

As we have seen, most countries with a communist régime today have a general school which, with more or less important variations, applies the principle of *polytechnical education* in such a way that it does not differ greatly — at least in theory — from Krupskaya's ideas. Certain authors[25] think that, to put it briefly, 'polytechnical instruction' has finally become what is basically just one more subject (with even a strong element of theory) in the curriculum. In any case, it is clear that these countries today do not usually defend the introduction of vocational training at the primary school level, even when this

level lasts a number of years. We must again call the reader's attention to the case of Yugoslavia, which was analysed a few pages above.

Early vocational training is, indeed, fully accepted by a large number of developing countries which consider it necessary to bring the primary, fundamental or basic school increasingly closer to their real needs. It is therefore mostly oriented towards agricultural work, although they also pay attention to other manual tasks (construction, mining, handicrafts, administrative work etc.).

From an exclusively theoretical point of view, preparation for a manual occupation, trade or activity would seem to constitute one of those 'basic learning needs' which should be contained in the educational package 'for everybody'. From a practical point of view, whether it is included or not in the programme of primary or basic education depends, in the final analysis, on the possibilities for such a programme to be supplemented by subsequent programmes.

Aside from that, sociological research strongly emphasizes that we are entering a world where there is going to be increasingly rapid occupational mobility. In such circumstances, any preparation for a specific occupation should be regarded, in principle, as 'provisional', subject to subsequent modifications, corrections or even complete changes of policy. To place too much stress on the objectives of professionalization might, especially if done too early, impede the development of a personality which should remain as open as possible in a world in permanent and accelerated evolution. This also seems to be the experience of countries belonging to a variety of economic and political systems.

Primary education: looking forward to lifelong education

When considering the efforts of some countries to provide suitable primary education for their citizens, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this may well be the *only opportunity* they have to give their citizens a reasonable education. Of course, this phenomenon is not restricted to developing countries, where it would be more easily explained; it can also be extended to those where institutional education has made considerable progress.

After studying almost a hundred reports from all corners of the globe, and which were undoubtedly prepared with the desire to help improve their own and other education systems, we once again see how difficult it is for these systems to adapt themselves to a thorough application of the idea of lifelong education. Enough years have already gone by since the well-known and no doubt influential book *Learning to be* first saw the light of day. From that time until now many things have changed, and in certain fields close to education

that of communication for example — enormous progress has been made. However, some of the statements contained in that book could be said again today as if for the first time:

For far too long education had the task of preparing for stereotyped functions, stable situations, for one moment in existence, for a particular trade or a given job. It inculcated conventional knowledge, in time-honoured categories. This concept is still far too prevalent. And yet, the idea of acquiring, at an early age, a set of intellectual or technical equipment valid for a lifetime is out of date. This fundamental axiom of traditional education is crumbling. Is not this the time to call for something quite different in education systems? Learning to live, learning to learn, so as to be able to absorb new knowledge all through life[26].

The present situation of primary education, in its various aspects, shows that it continues to be a water-tight compartment within education systems, leading to, at the most, only a minimal co-ordination with the stage that follows it. In many places, it is relied on as if it were the only opportunity for the cultural and, perhaps, the vocational advancement of a large part of the population. Elsewhere, something more is required of it: that it should lay the foundations for a more ambitious or specialized education which, in any case, can only be carried out in one or two more phases. The charges of inefficiency, which are frequently raised, are based precisely on one of these two considerations: either because the pupil is not well enough equipped to cope with his social and working life, or else because he is not provided with the right conceptual and behavioural tools to continue with certain studies which are more detailed or specialized. In both cases, primary education is relied on as a decisive, if not the only, factor in learning.

Perhaps because of its special condition of being the first, systematically organized step in an uninterrupted series of studies which will extend all through life, primary education is especially in need of far-reaching rethinking in the light of lifelong education. This could largely help to reduce its problems. What the pupil does not achieve in primary education itself, he could certainly achieve in some other stage of his life, always provided that his environment will be able to offer him certain indispensable facilities and the necessary incentive (which is certainly not easy to do in the circumstances in which many countries still find themselves). On the other hand, it is becoming clearer every day that the primary school is only one important educational tool among others of varying degrees of importance.

The most unquestioned dogma in education is that related to the school: Education equals School. Of course, it is true that schools, in absolute terms — by numerical expansion and qualitative improvement — continue to develop their fundamental role in the education system. But the school's importance in relation to other means of education and of communication between the generations is not increasing, but diminishing[27].

It is not surprising, therefore, that some of the reports we have been analysing explicitly or implicitly advocate a certain *movement away from the school* in

the sense of not looking at the school with that rather ingenuous optimism which we have perhaps inherited from the past two centuries and in the sense of encouraging the *simultaneous* action of those other means of education and communication which, owing to the monopoly of the school day's schedule, are now relegated to the status of intrusions into the education system. Naturally, many and varied makeshift measures will be needed in order to attain this goal. For example, by vitalizing out-of-school activities (as is being done in quite a few countries) or by institutions which are both educational and recreational (of the German *Kinderhorte* type). In developing countries, various forms of *community school*, which generally make it possible to open up the school to adults and to what are not traditionally 'school' activities, also help greatly to place primary education in a new space/time perspective which is much closer to the concept of lifelong education.

3. THE FUTURE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Now that we are almost at the end of this book, it is perhaps particularly appropriate to sum up in a few lines what seem to be the main trends in the development of primary education at the end of a century which has undoubtedly done much to extend and perfect it. And at the same time it will serve as a concise summary of what we have dealt with in the preceding pages. This is also an opportunity for dialogue, reflection and comparing opinions, which is increasingly necessary at the present important stage. To sum up, it seems to me important to draw attention to a few trends or — to use the language of the unforgettable Pedro Rosselló — a few *currents* which we find especially significant.

1. It may be said that the *process of nationalization* of primary education, which has been increasing throughout the twentieth century, has been universally on the rise in the last two decades, as is especially obvious in the young nations. However, the situation is tending to become stabilized in many places and, in some important countries of various cultural backgrounds, there seems to be a slowly growing process of revitalizing initiative and local or private participation at this level, although with new characteristics. Circumstances of a different kind — especially financial — might favour a gradual increase in denationalization process in the next few decades.

2. With respect to the *government and administration* of primary education, it has been possible, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, to observe a tendency to correct each country's own policy in a contrary direction.

tion. In the case of nations with a centralized government and administration (the majority), the tendency has been towards some more or less pronounced form of decentralization; while the traditionally regionalized (or, as is commonly said, decentralized) countries have, on the other hand, experienced centralizing movements which have taken the form of strengthening — or even in some cases of creating — central government units. However, it is rare that these processes have led to any radical change in the political-administrative physiognomy of the countries concerned. Broadly speaking, the map of the centralized countries (the most numerous) and the regionalized countries (the least numerous) have remained substantially unchanged since at least the end of the Second World War. There has perhaps been an increase in the number of countries which reflect processes of change.

Although the above-mentioned trend can be applied to the education system as a whole, it has a particular effect on primary education because the latter is closely linked to small local communities. Therefore, it frequently takes the form of increasing the powers of municipal and local authorities in establishing, programming and managing the schools. While these powers, as the result of central financing, have been reduced, reasons of efficiency and adjustment to local needs seem to have introduced a change of policy in this respect, a change which will probably become more apparent in the course of time.

3. The increasing *financial allocations* made to primary education in recent times are, and probably will continue to be, one of the biggest items in educational budgets and in public expenditures in general. The problem is whether, in spite of these increases, they will actually be able to cover the always greater increase in the costs of education. In this respect, the forecasts to be found in well-documented international studies tend to be rather pessimistic. In the decade of the 1970s, it proved impossible to achieve the rate of increase registered during the two previous decades; a large number of countries even experienced a decline in the levels already achieved, while others, even if they retained them or increased them slightly, were unable to maintain them as a proportion of their costs. Moreover, the primary level witnessed a decline in its relative allocations in comparison with higher levels. The comparison between them is especially disproportionate and serious in developing countries (whereas in Europe a teacher's post in higher education costs twice as much as one in a primary school, in Africa south of the Sahara it costs 100 times more). In short, we can expect serious difficulties of a financial nature in the coming decade for all countries, but very special difficulties for those which are still struggling to provide a real education for the whole population of school age and ensuring that at least the minimum quality of primary school services is provided.

4. *Foreign economic aid* will continue to be vital for the quantitative qualitative progress of primary education in the developing countries. The future possibility of this aid will depend greatly on the course of the world economy and the climate of détente and collaboration which can be fostered between countries.
5. As to the *specific method of financing* primary education, it seems that there will be a continuation of the general tendency for the central authorities to handle the allocation and management of the basic budgetary items, especially teachers' salaries. In many countries, however, we find a favourable trend towards grant greater autonomy to the local authorities and the schools themselves in managing their ordinary operating expenses.
6. *School centres operated by special or private initiative* — such as exist in many countries — have, together with a considerable decline in their number, experienced an increase in State or public support, aimed at the application of the principle that education should be free of charge. It would not seem that this trend will undergo any important modifications in the next few years.
7. Recently, efforts at *educational planning* at the primary school level have been concentrating not so much on goals of quantitative expansion as on the intensification of the use of resources to achieve greater qualitative efficiency. At the same time, we find that planning is being diverted from the national to the regional level. These tendencies will probably be gradually accelerated, especially as modern communication technologies come into greater use in the educational field.
8. Due to various causes (financial difficulties, the alarming number of drop-outs and repeaters), education systems are being required to make an *increasingly strict evaluation of their resources*, of the operation of their institutions and of their results. A logical consequence of this process would be the intensification and improvement of their work of *school supervision or inspection* in all countries, as well as close attention to *educational research* as a means of perfecting the performance of the system. It is obvious that all this is especially relevant to first-level education.
9. At the present time in many countries *compulsory education extends beyond primary education*. This overshoot will probably continue to increase, but will depend on what is considered to be the proper number of years for primary education (see below).

10. Primary education now has an *average duration of six years*, and in an important number of countries it is even more. However, we find very marked differences concerning how long primary education should last, its duration varying between three and nine years. In the next few decades, these divergent views can be expected to come closer together, as a more thorough study is made of the very nature of this educational level.

11. There is a tendency to think of primary education not as a unique and continuous stage with uniform objectives for the entire period, but rather that it consists of *short cycles (generally two or three years)*, each one of which has its own objectives, content and didactic characteristics.

12. The *entrance age* in primary education tends increasingly, in most countries, to be age 6. The *leaving age* shows greater variations depending on countries, the average being around age 12. Views on this point can be expected to come into closer agreement.

13. As pre-school education is becoming more popular throughout the world, it is necessary to establish *greater continuity of action between pre-school institutions and primary schools*. We can expect an intensification of innovations and action in this direction.

14. *An adequate articulation between primary and secondary education* is today an object of concern in many countries, and many initiatives of various kinds have been, and still are being, pursued in this respect. However, what still remains to be solved is a problem of a conceptual nature, namely, to establish clearly what should be the specific objectives and tasks of both levels of education. Greater consideration of this problem can be expected in the next few years.

15. Although the establishment of a *single primary education*, equal for everybody in all substantial respects, has been gradually gaining ground in all countries, the *typological diversity of institutions* is still a fact which could increase even further in the future in a desire to become more and better adapted to environmental circumstances and special needs. Presumably, such institutional differences will tend to favour greater efficiency and will not in any way lead to unevenness in the quality of resources.

16. As far as the *organization of classes and activities* is concerned, there has been a gradual increase in the calendar (number of school days) and the timetable (number of school hours per week), together with a tendency to

restrict school activity to five days per week. Full-day school attendance has become a fact in many countries and constitutes a goal for others. However, it is not clear whether this trend is going to continue in the future. The present course of development might be considerably altered by the application of new technologies to education, as well as by the increase in out-of-school activities and the various institutions established for that purpose.

17. In countries with very different circumstances and states of development, we can observe a growing *participation on the part of the community* in supervising and managing the schools. Many experiments — among which the so-called ‘community schools’ are outstanding in the developing countries — are being carried out and will probably continue to be carried out in the years to come.

18. The *objectives assigned to primary education* by different countries emphasize the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, the full development of personality and the establishment of a general foundation for subsequent education. No substantial changes can be expected in this respect, but rather an effort to change these general objectives into others which will be more specific, operational and subject to evaluation.

19. Although priority in the *content of primary education* continues to be given to knowledge of the pupil’s own language and basic mathematics, there has also been a movement towards including a considerable number of subjects of a scientific and social type, which are often taught together in some interdisciplinary field. Growing importance has also been attached to artistic education and physical training. The teaching of a foreign language and work of a practical kind (whether productive or not) have also been introduced in many schools, while other subjects (such as those of a religious nature) are still taught in similar, or somewhat smaller, proportions — depending on the countries — to those of former times. It does not seem that there are going to be considerable changes in these subjects as a whole, although in many countries we observe a tendency to place more weight on moral education, while there is also a tendency to specify what ought to be considered ‘minimum subjects’ in each field of study.

20. At the end of the twentieth century, the *methods and techniques of teaching* used in primary education still seem to be of a fairly traditional kind. The computer revolution will probably introduce far-reaching changes in the methodology of school teaching, but these changes will take some time to appear and even more to come into general use.

21. *Continuous evaluation* has generally made great progress in the last few decades, but less than what might have been suggested by the enthusiasm of the theoretical statements made on its behalf. The most widespread trend is to combine continuous with periodical evaluation, so as to give all evaluation an educational slant. The system of *collectively promoting* pupils from one course to another has been adopted by many countries, but many others still think it is unsatisfactory and counterproductive. In these respects, too, we can expect subsequent changes to take place as a result of the introduction of new technologies.
22. In spite of the fact that there have been many proposals (some of them even from governments) to improve the *economic, social and cultural situation of primary school-teachers*, there are no realistic prospects of progress, even to the same extent as proved possible in the last few decades. Nevertheless, specific action will be necessary if there is to be any qualitative improvement in primary education, especially in rural and suburban areas.
23. As for the *training of primary school-teachers*, there will probably continue to be considerable differences of opinion between the developed and the developing countries. The most pronounced trend is to require training to be at university or post-secondary level, as well as to restrict it within an *integrated* framework of policies and plans (ranging from improvements in professional status to the introduction of curricular reforms and innovations, etc.). Other evident trends are to make the training centres for primary school-teachers *more open* (by admitting students who are not necessarily aiming at primary school-teaching and making them closer to other higher education institutions), to strengthen the importance of *teaching practice* and to bring about a closer relationship between *initial training and continuous training*.
24. It is very probably that *a large number of developing countries will enter the twenty-first century without having succeeded in universalizing primary education*. The constant population growth in these countries, as well as other demographic factors (migration to the big cities, the persistence of neglected rural areas, etc.) will make it even more difficult to overcome the existing obstacles (lack of financial resources, premature employment of children and young people, lack of physical infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, cultural backwardness of the community, etc.).
25. During the next few years, the developed countries, because their low birth-rate cannot even replace the present generations, will continue to find a

decline in the number of their primary school pupils, which will give the opportunity for qualitative improvements but also confront them with serious problems in the long term. In any case, they will have to continue and intensify their efforts on behalf of *underprivileged minorities and groups* (immigrants, foreign refugees, ethnic minorities, etc.).

26. There will be an intensification of efforts to reduce the alarming number of *school drop-outs* in many countries, especially in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. Many other countries, while not having such high drop-out figures, are nevertheless frequently confronted with the situation of *wastage*, as shown by the high number of repeaters and pupils who do not achieve even the minimum objectives of primary education. This situation can only be corrected by a far-reaching improvement in the quality of education.

27. This explains why the *quality of education* is the fundamental goal of *renewal and innovations* which are being carried out and will be carried out in the next few years. In accordance with a growing trend, such innovations should not be aimed so much at important changes in present structures as at the achievement of specific objectives, content and methods of teaching. With respect to content objectives, the influence of modern technologies on the teaching/learning process is still very small, and will probably continue to be so for some time to come. If an influence of this kind could make itself felt more quickly and more actively, it would only be logical that it should also lead to more far-reaching changes, without discarding those of a structural type.

28. Everywhere there has been a widespread and growing belief that what in former times was considered to be 'primary education' (i.e. four or five years of school attendance) is not sufficient to provide all citizens with the minimum knowledge, habits and skills they need in order to play their proper part in society. Either by way of compulsory schooling or by other means, real education tends to increase both in number of years and in educational diversity. In the next few decades, this tendency will make it necessary to *redefine primary education as an educational level*. It would seem that it could take two main directions. The first would be to consider primary education as the early period of general instruction which constitutes the minimum initial educational package open to all citizens. The second would be to consider it a preparatory phase or period of this general or basic education. It is obvious that the definition of the nature and functions, objectives, content and methods of primary education will greatly depend on which direction finally prevails.

29. In any case, the great attention given to the idea of *lifelong education* and the almost unanimous agreement existing, in theory, in all countries about its desirability, makes it likely that we can expect a reorientation of all the processes of initial teaching, and particularly that which constitutes the process of initial teaching *par excellence* — primary education.

30. In this connection, it is also foreseeable (or perhaps only desirable?) that the dawn of the twenty-first century should coincide with *a stage of new renovating enthusiasm* with regard to human education, thus bringing to a close the phase of conservatism and fatigue which characterizes the end of the twentieth century; a century which, nevertheless, will take a distinguished place in the history of education for many reasons, but more especially for having succeeded in making primary education a reality, if not for all, at least for the great majority of human beings.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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6. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Educational trends in the 1970s: a quantitative analysis*. Paris, 1984, p. 16.
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20. See particularly: Unesco. Office of Statistics. Division of Statistics on Education. *International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)*. Paris, 1976. 396 p. (COM.75/WS/27); and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Classification of educational systems in OECD member countries*. Paris, 1972-1975. 10 v. See also Hilker's classification adopted by the Committee for General and Technical Education of the Council of Europe (see Council of Europe. Council for Cultural Co-operation.

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 24. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
 25. For example, *Ibid.*, p. 201-203.
 26. Faure, E., et al. *Learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow*. Paris, U London, Harrap, 1972, p. 69.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 82-83.

There is no doubt that during the twentieth century the spread of primary education has been spectacular. Whether by equipping the pupil for entry into social and working life, or by providing conceptual and behavioural tools for further studies, primary education is decisive. Yet, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, there are still immense areas of the world without proper primary schools. Basing himself largely upon the documentation of the thirty-ninth International Conference on Education, José Luis García Garrido of the National University of Distance Education, Madrid, describes the main trends in the development of primary education towards the end of a century that has done much to extend and improve it.